Wasted Away

A graphic novel by Sarah

Part 1:

Genetically Privileged

WASTED AWAY

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!
THIS IS YOUR FUTURE!
A WORLD DESTINED TO BE BLOWN TO COMPLETE SMITHEREENS AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON!
THE THIRD WORLD WAR IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER, AND MOST OF YOU WILL CONTINUE TO SIT AROUND, OBLIVIOUS TO THE IMMINENT DANGER!
I'M HERE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND HOW YOU CAN SURVIVE...

12/25/13

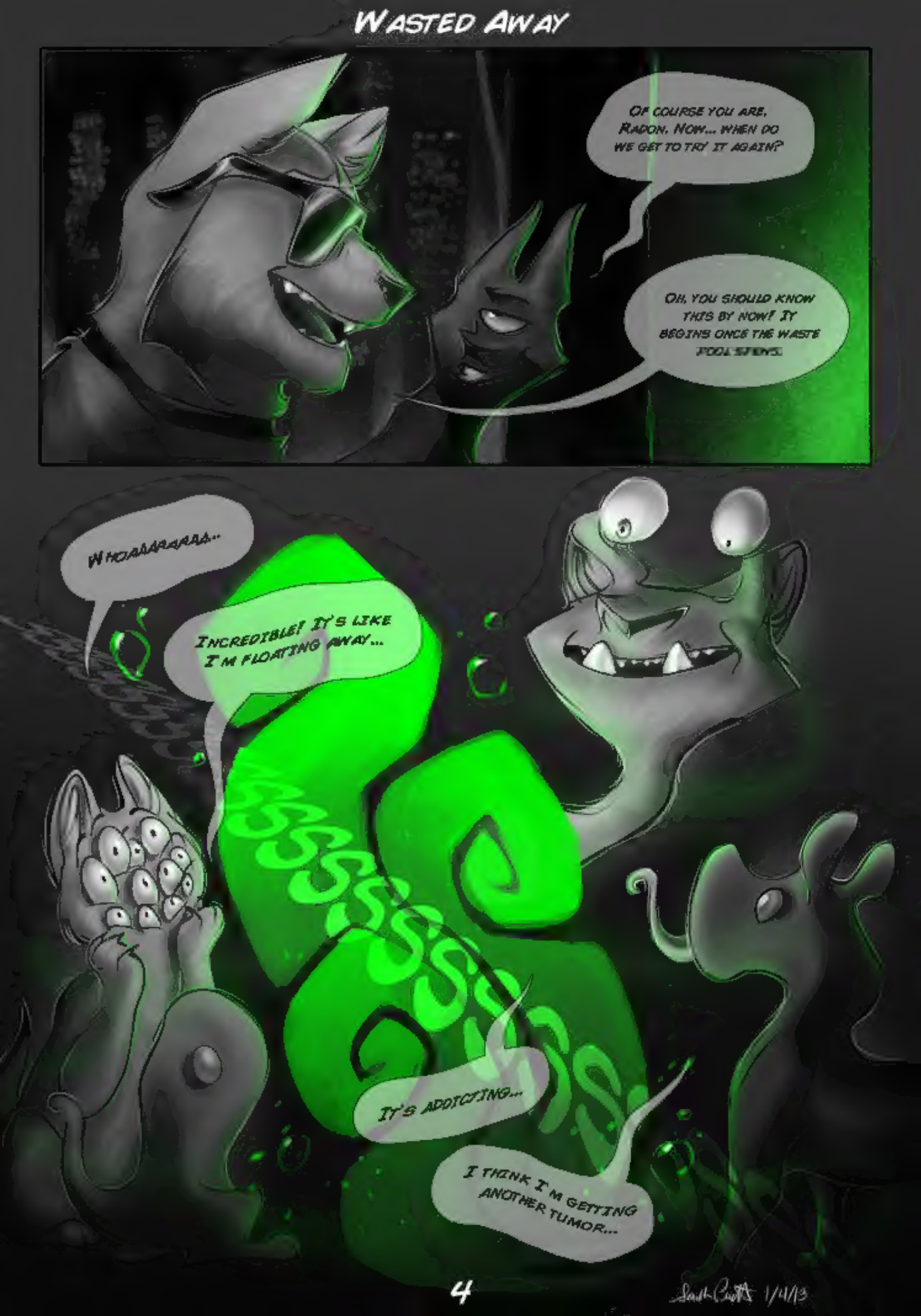
Wasted Away

SMASH!
PATHETIC!

I HEAR THIS ALL THE TIME AND NOTHING EVER HAPPENS!
LIKE I'D BELIEVE ANY OF THAT...

<GRUMBLE>
<GRUMBLE>
<COMPLAIN>

Wasted Away


Of course you are, Radon. Now... when do we get to try it again?
Oh, you should know this by now! It begins once the waste pool settles.
Whoaaaaaaaa..
Incredible! It's like I'm floating away...
Sssssss
It's addicting...
I think I'm getting another tumor...

1/4/13

Uhh. Hello!? Hello!?
Ez, please! They are obviously busy at the moment!
As far as we know, they could be vicious killers!
Yeah, get outta here, we're in the middle of something!
'Ey! What are you doing here!?
Guys, guys... the last thing we want to do is drive away new members. I'm everyone's ally here.
Oh, Radon... I highly advise that you~

Just give him... them... it a chance. I'm sure this newcomer will only be going to stay here for one night. Let's make it feel at home, shall we?

Come with me.

Oh, thank you, thank you...

For not, um... hurting or killing us...

What brings you both here, anyway?

We're actually just looking for somewhere to live, really. We've been traveling for SO long...
Look at my shining coat. It's got FILTH all over it!
Ez, quit whining! Please... we're trying to get this cat to help us.
Oh... yes. My name is Ez, and this here is my brother, Gerald.
We've been stuck together for as long as I remember.
It was the result of "mutation", I believe.
Well, luckily, here there are so many cats like you you'll fit right in.
This is a place I founded I like to call "Wasted Away".
There is a special waste pit that releases some kind of gas mixture that cats like me find extremely addicting.
The locals seem to worship me for finding it.

But you two seem a bit worn. Where on earth did you come from?
We ran off from this city a while ago. Our parents didn't really like us too much after we were born, mainly because we weren't the perfect kitten they were expecting...
A deformed cat, who wants that?
So, you're fairly young, then. The nuclear meltdown here wasn't too long ago.
Well, yes...
How did you survive the meltdown?
I mean. I was just wondering how your family managed to survive the nuclear meltdown in this city without affecting you?

The meltdown? I was born a few day's after it, and my sister and I were named after that huge event.
My family and I were protected because we lived on the opposite side of town.
But quite a lot of the cats I knew had come back sickly and gross, especially the next generation...

I wish our parents were as lucky as yours... Are they still alive?
I'm sorry about that, I really am.
But at least here you'll fit in perfectly. My parents aren't around anymore, but at least they lived long, happy lives.

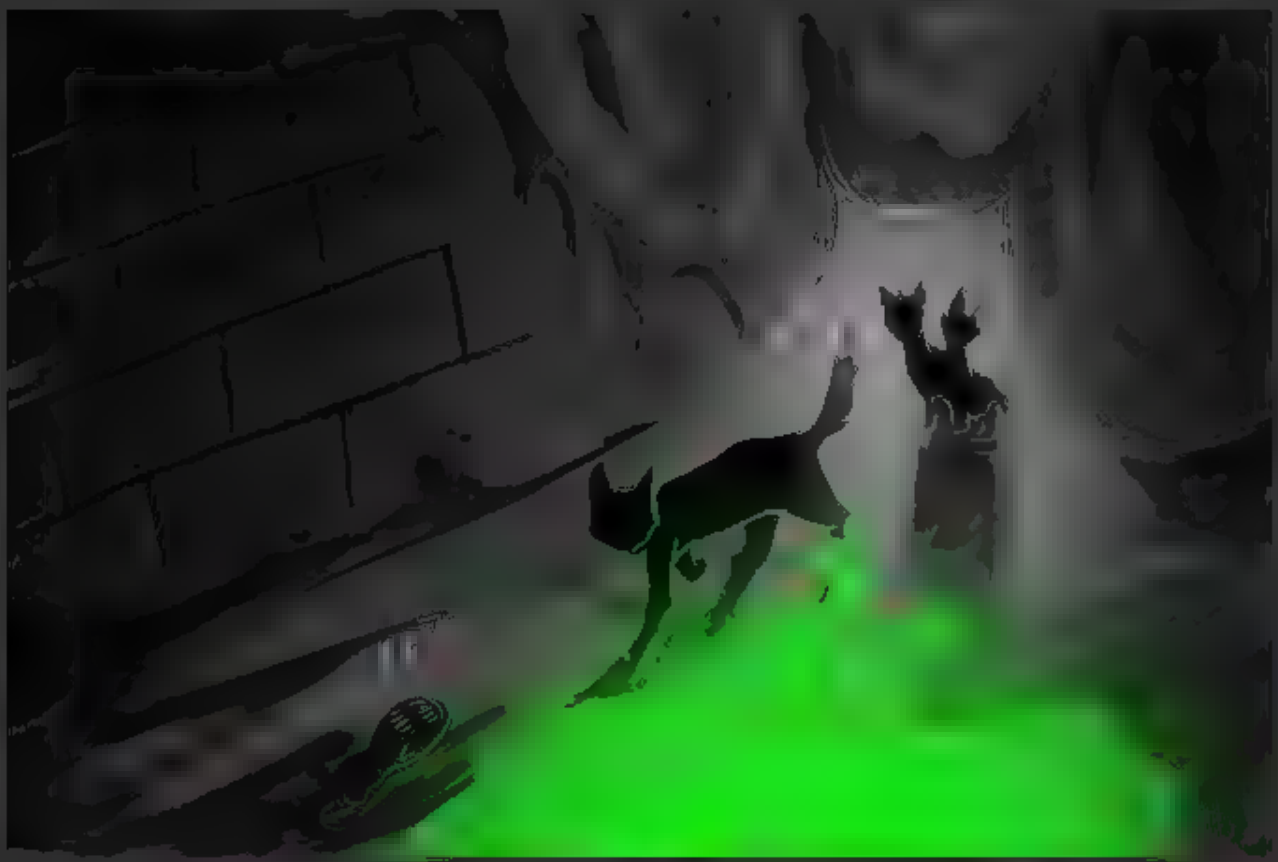
Yeah...
We're way off-track. What happened after you ran off? And why did you come back?
We searched across the country for a place we could forget our childhood and start fresh again...

Wasted Away

We asked ourselves, "How hard could it be?"
But we had overestimated the kindness of others.
Oh. It was horrible!
We went to escape ridicule and what we got in return was the same that we ran away from.
Eventually, we decided to return to this city. We thought the melt-down here would cause other cats
. Interesting.

I'm not one to decline someone's request to join this club of mine... Welcome to Wasted Away
I do sincerely hope you have a nice time. We'll talk later. You seem like an interesting pair

Oh yes, sir. Thank you!
Call me Radon. I will see you later



WHEEEEEEEE

SHOOP!

Hello, Blitz
Static! Your brother's home!

Take those ridiculous sunglasses off. Cats don't wear sunglasses.
Radon! You're back!
Heyyy... tomorrow, do you think we can-
Sorry, Static, but I'm busy managing Wasted Away. Maybe some other time.
Try asking your sister. I am positive she's up to it some time tomorrow.
Oh, please
Why don't you ever find time to be with us, anyway? You're outside all the time... are your loyal "subjects" more important than us?

Blitz, we've been through this... I'm running a business!
Cough A free business, that is... And look at us, now! We have a high social ranking! Everyone loves-

Alright, I'm gonna stop you right there.
You sure those cats aren't just praising you because of Wasted Away? They're all addicted to it.
I'm not buying it, Radon. That's why I brought it up. Every cat here wants to be recognized.

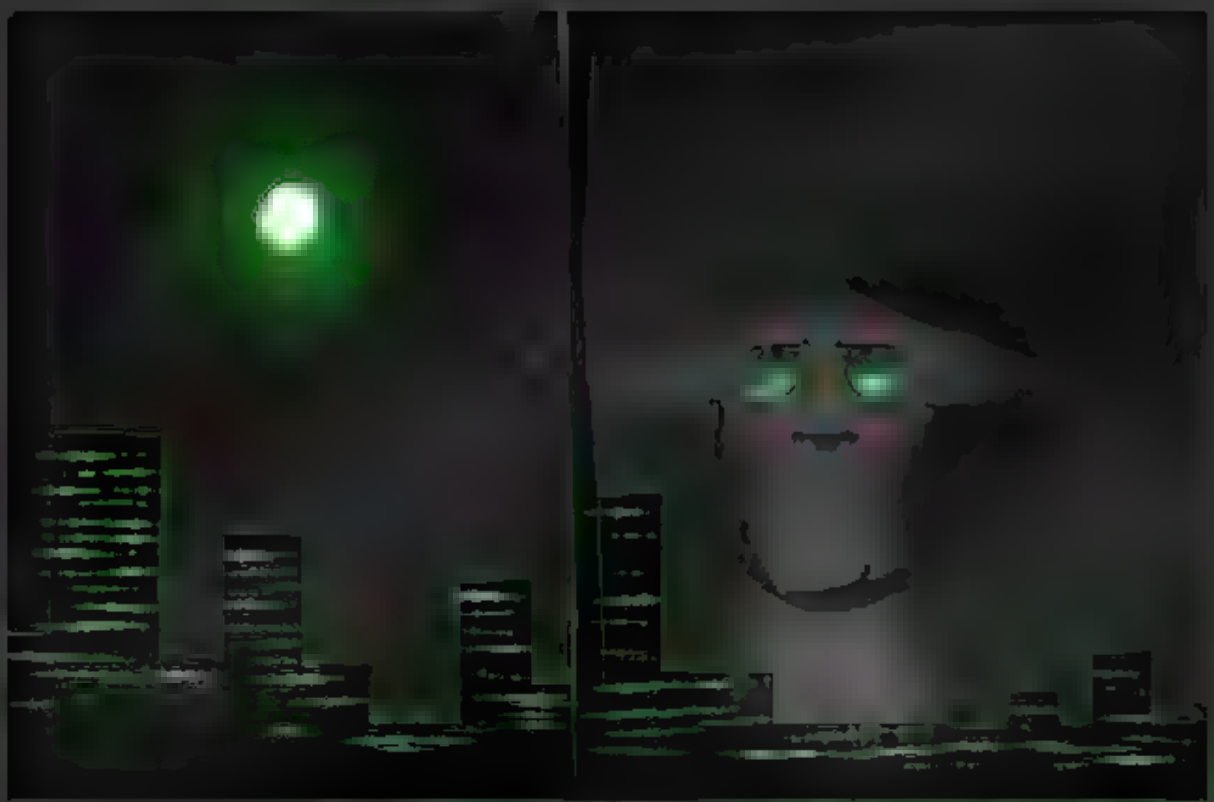
Come on
You're not listening-
I'm listening FINE!

Wasted Away

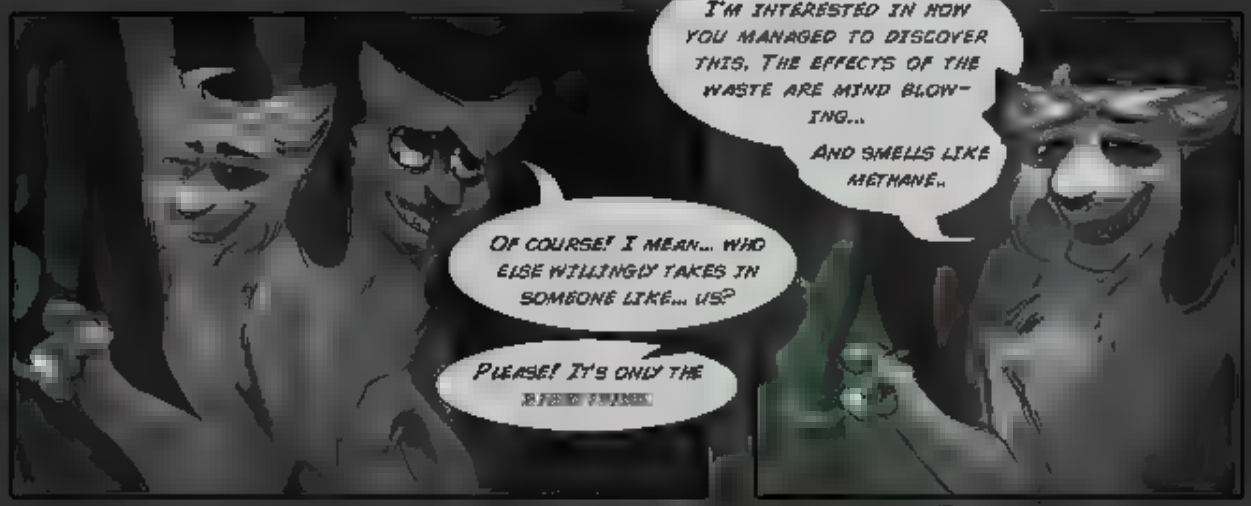
I'm sorry...

But Static and I are wondering where the rest of our family is.

JUMP!



A FEW [illegible] WEEKS LATER...
You know. I've had a lot of ADMIRERS before, but you two seem to have a genuine interest in Wasted Away


I'm interested in how you managed to discover this. The effects of the waste are mind blowing...
And smells like methane.
Of course! I mean... who else willingly takes in someone like... us?
Please! It's only the [illegible]

It's actually interesting how you've managed to stay intact. I mean, you don't have any disfigurements.

That... is a mystery. I thought stumbling across the waste pit would destroy me but for some reason I SEEM perfectly fine.
Maybe it's just... LUCK.

8/5/13

Wasted Away

Luck?
Luck...
Heh. Luck...

Well... ever since I founded this place a few months ago I have been feeling a bit unlike myself...
But anyway, perhaps once I get to know you better I could promote you both. You seem alright.

Really?

Of course. But you both will have to... um...

AAAAAAAAOOOOOOOOOOOO
Or...

I-I-I can't! They said this was Impossible! No! It can't be happening -
OOOO

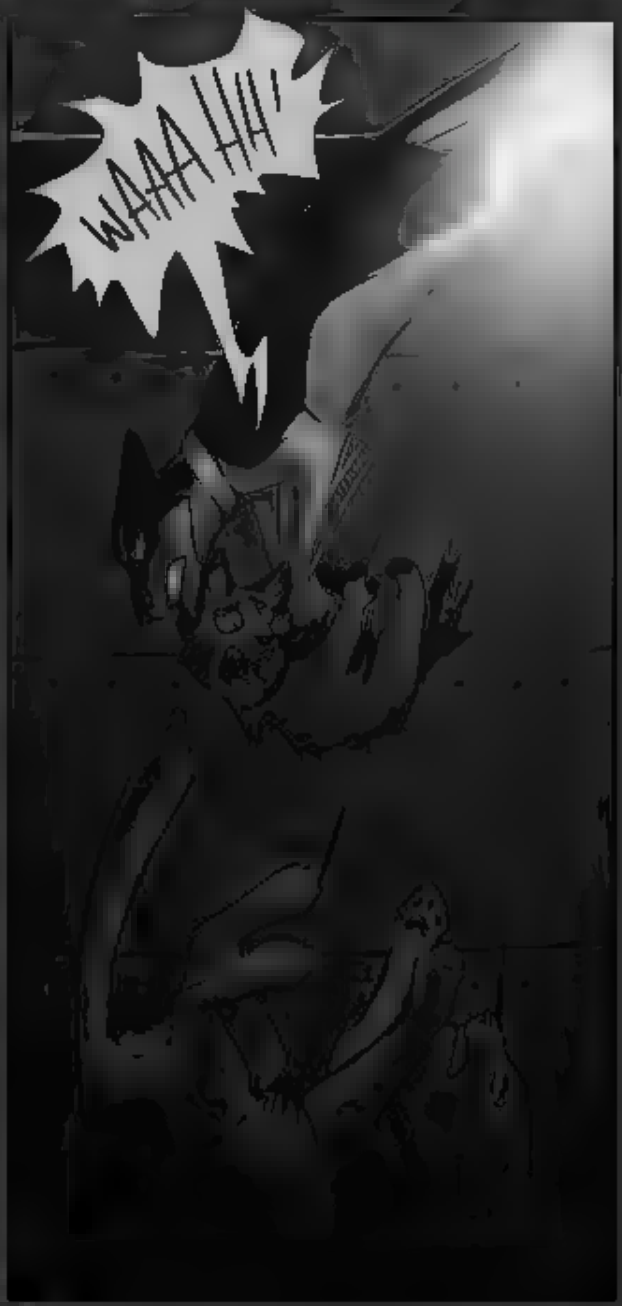
CATCH!

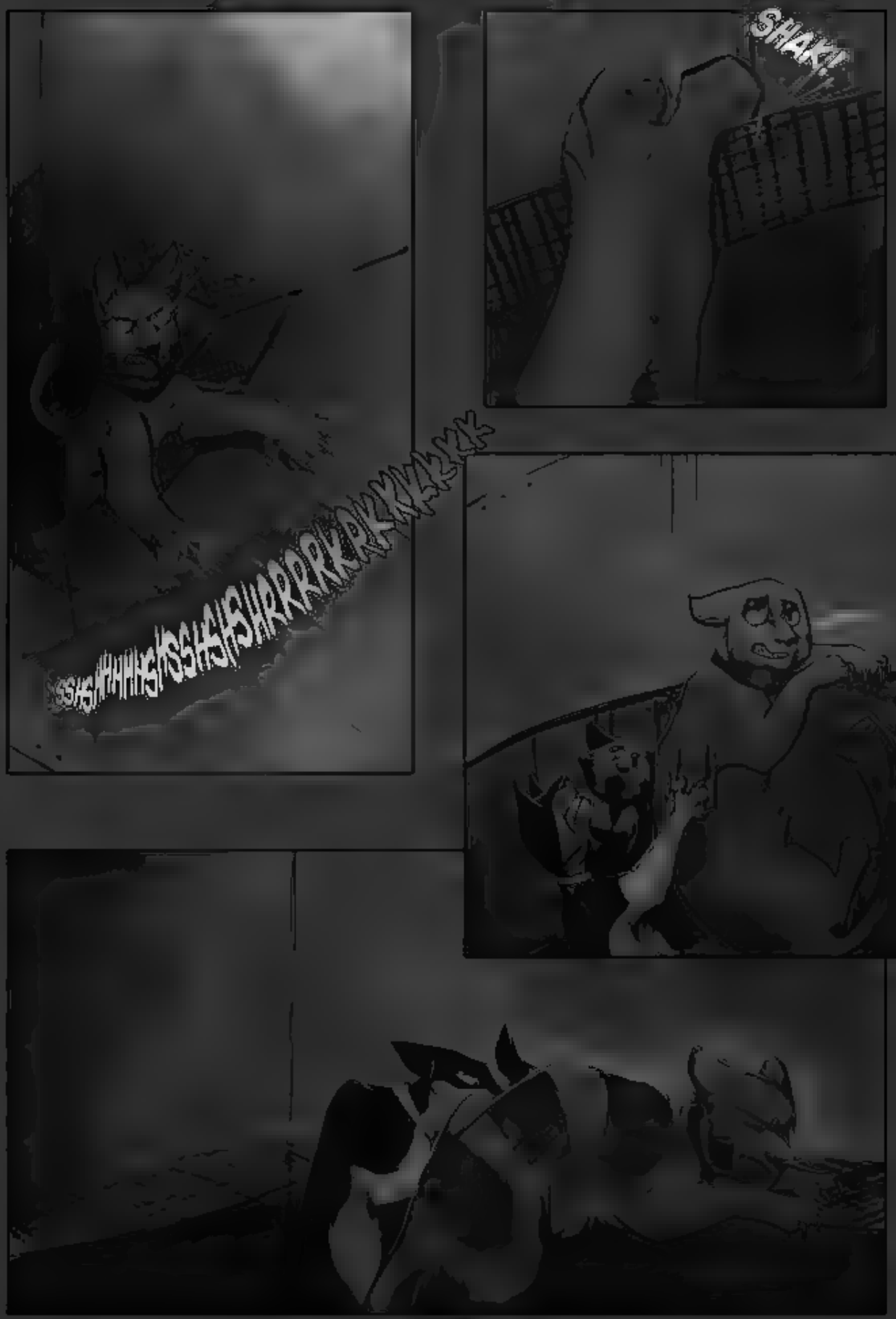
What are you doing!? This is the place Radon lives!
So? Do you know what that siren was!? If we don't find a place to take shelter we'll be cooked up and served with a side of radioactive waste material!
Now, where do you suppose we hide?

Beth Pratt 8/4/13

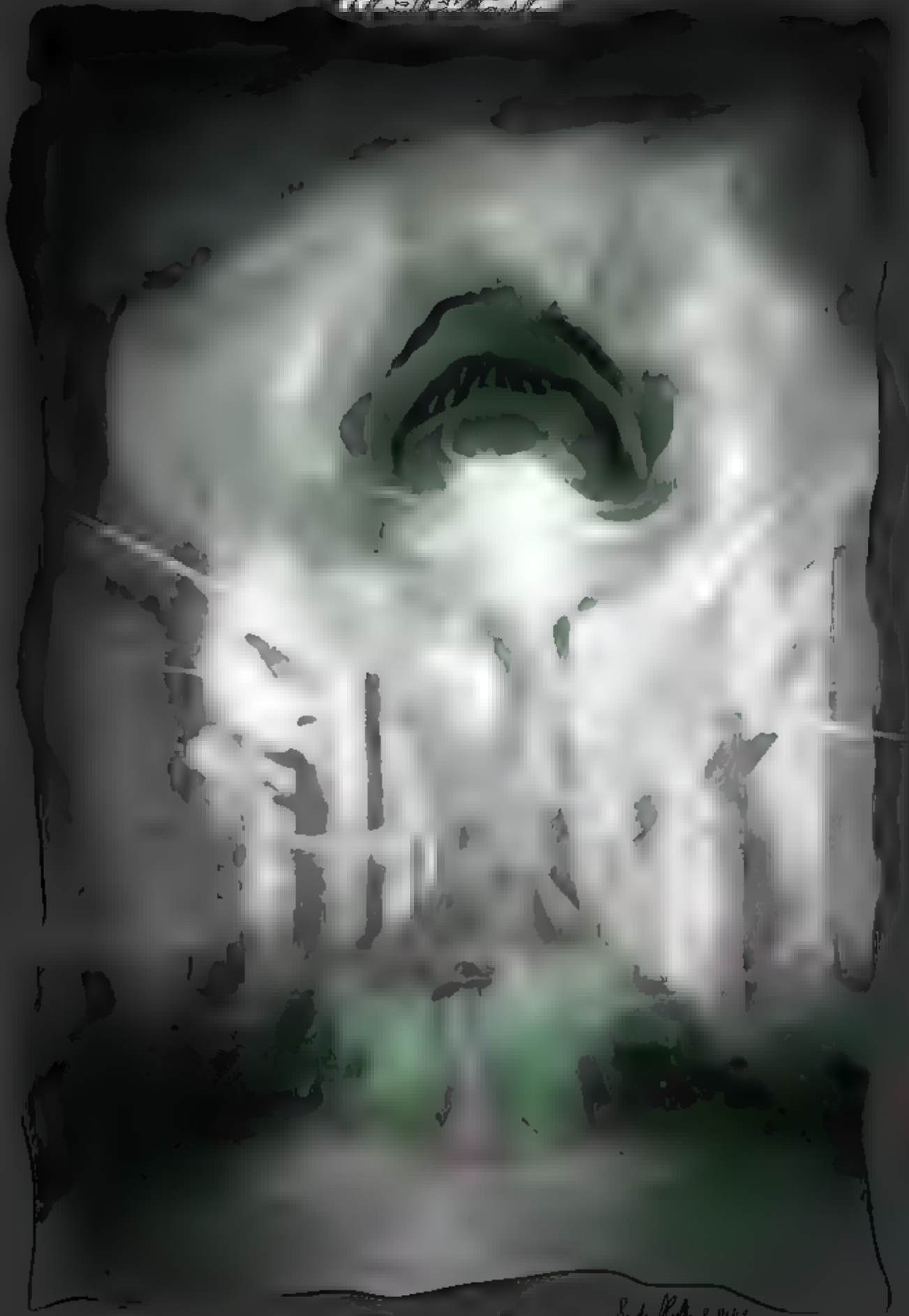
No.
NO!
It's empty!
Radon, what do we do, just. Like, jump down it or something!?
I can't think of anything that would be better.
Ready?

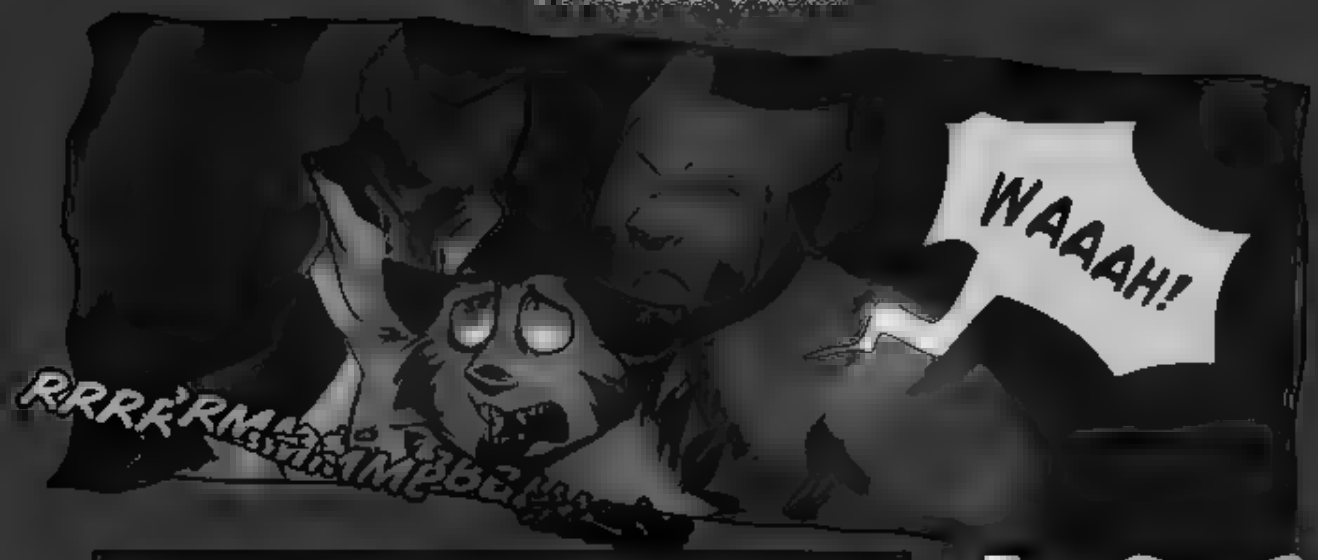
No. I'm not ready!

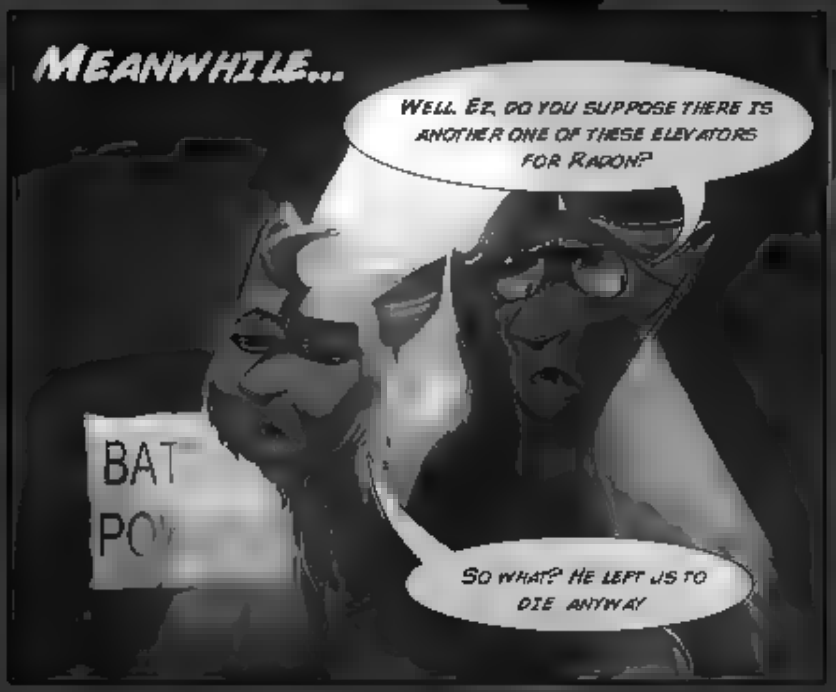

WAHHH!


SHAK!
SSHSHHHHHSSSHSHSHRRRKRKKKKKK

Wasted Away




WAAAH!


Meanwhile...
Well, Ez, do you suppose there is another one of these elevators for Radon?
BAT
PO
So what? He left us to die anyway

He said he has a sister!
Do we even know if she lives with him!?

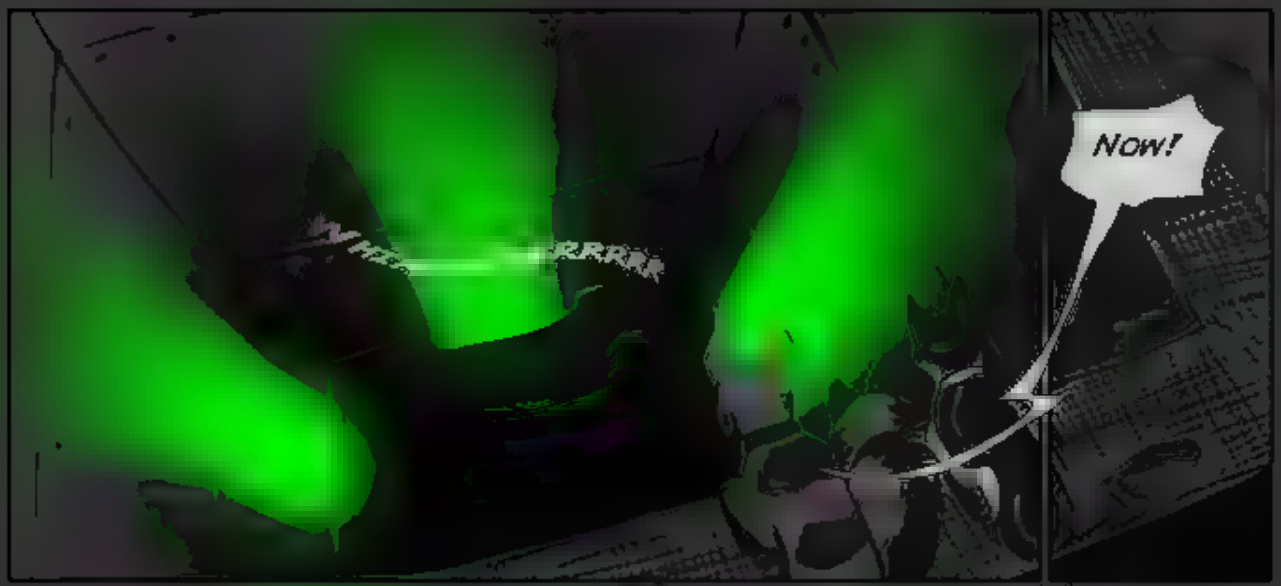
Maybe that's why he ran off instead of getting in here!
...

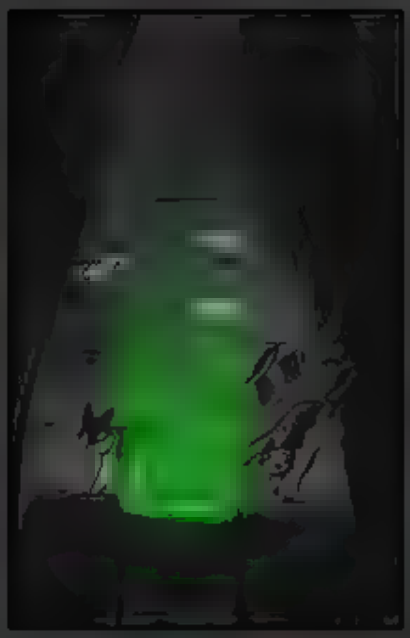
Later...
It's over, Static. It's alright
I thought it was impossible...

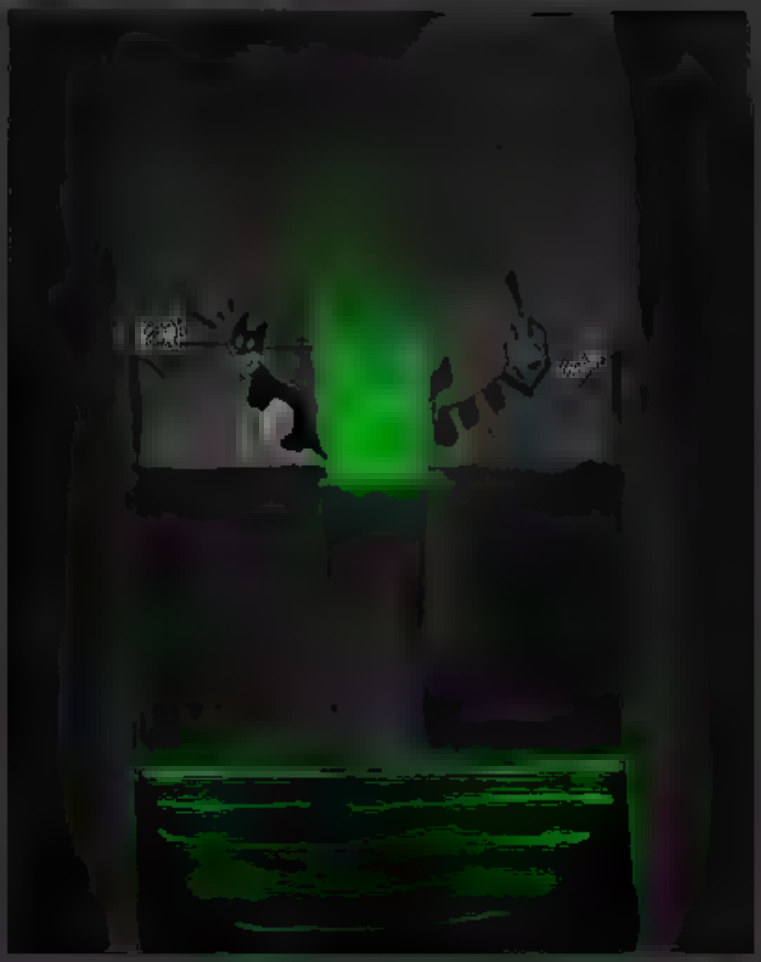
That what? The escape pod would be gone or the bomb would explode? Both sound pretty impossible to me.

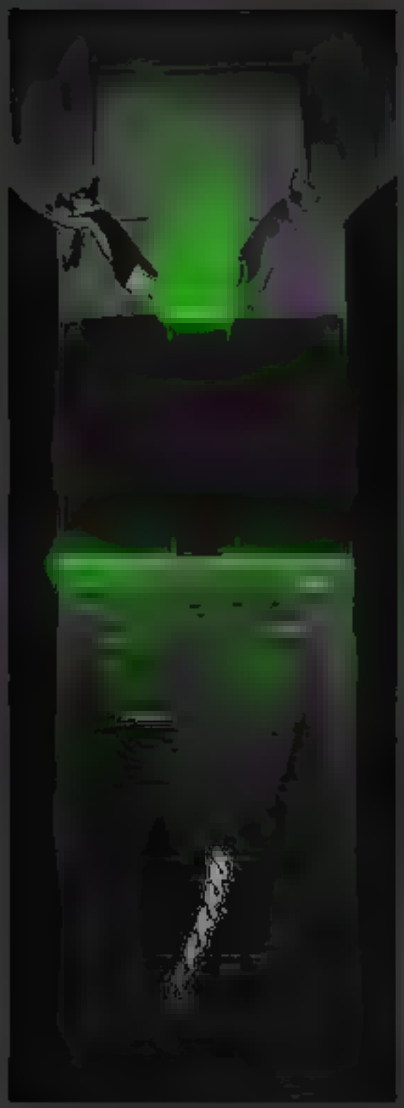
..Blitz. Static... do you hear that?

That must be the escape elevator. When it gets closer we jump right on the top.

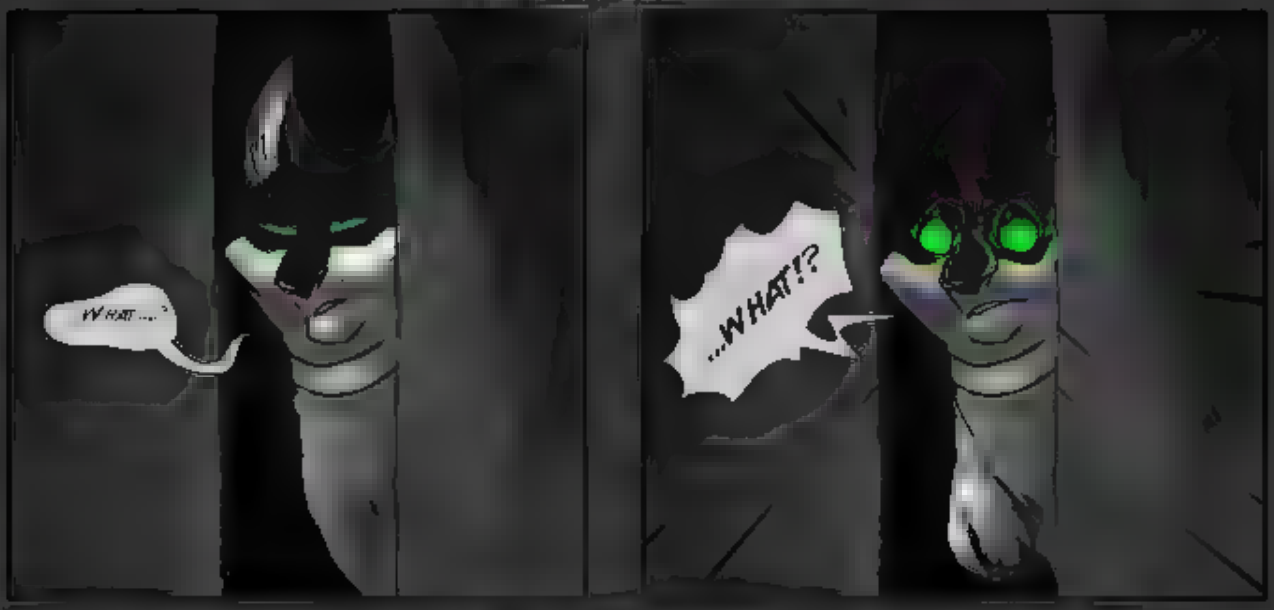

Now!

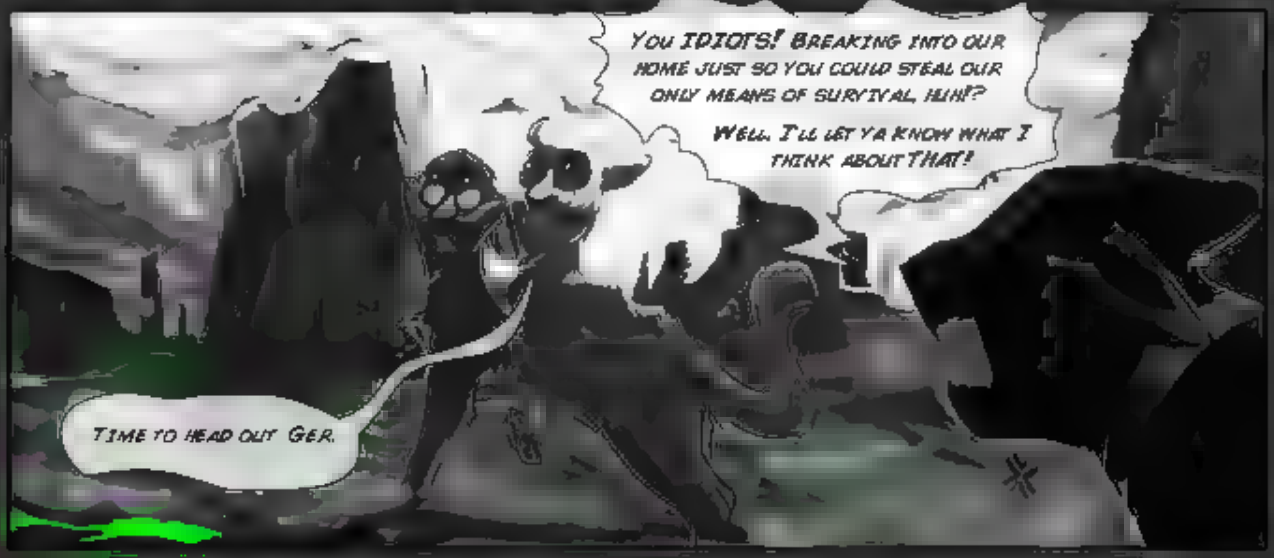






Leah Rudd 5/11/19


WHAT...?
...WHAT!?


You IDIOTS! Breaking into our home just so you could steal our only means of survival, huh!?
Well, I'll let ya know what I think about THAT!
Time to head out Ger.

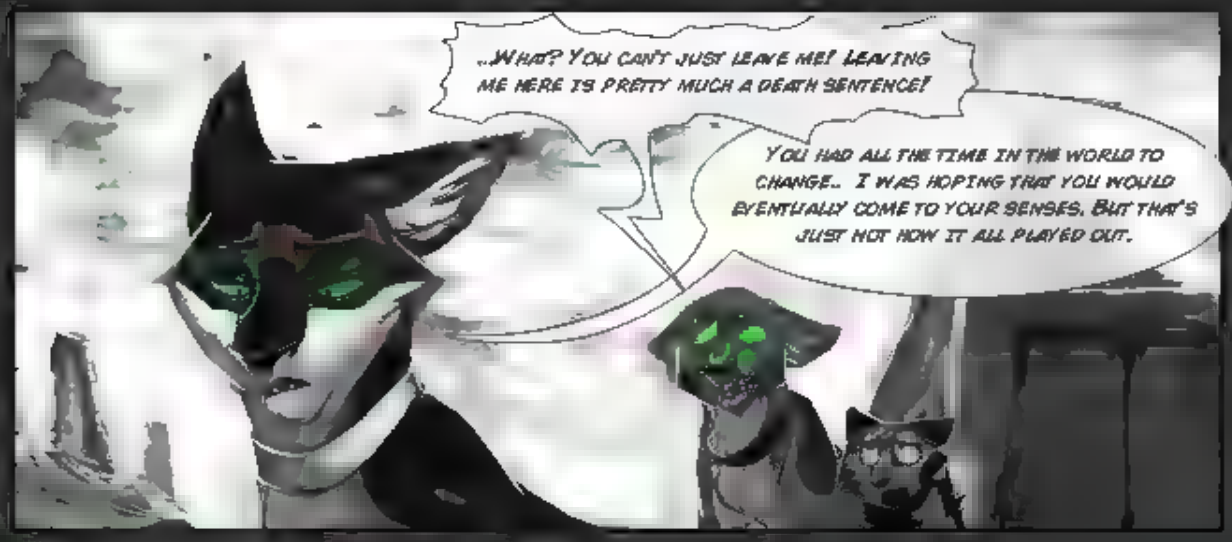
I told you Radon had a sister! I told you. I told you, I TOLD YOU!
Quit blabbering and use your leg!
I am!

Wasted Away

What? How, I mean...? They must have followed me to-
You knew them?
I did, but I never thought they would ever-
Yes... you knew them. Look at just what making friends did to you.
We could have DIED today, Radon. The city is completely destroyed and we would have gone down with it
You know, if it wasn't for you we would have been perfectly safe. Social ranking? Ha! What use is it if something like... like THIS happens!?
Radon, you are a DANGER to our family
I'm sorry-
Sorry doesn't fix everything... Static and I have to go.
We're leaving Radon?
Radon can't stay with us anymore. If it wasn't for him we would have been perfectly safe the entire time.
It'll be hard for a little while but it's not like he made any effort to spend time with us, anyway.

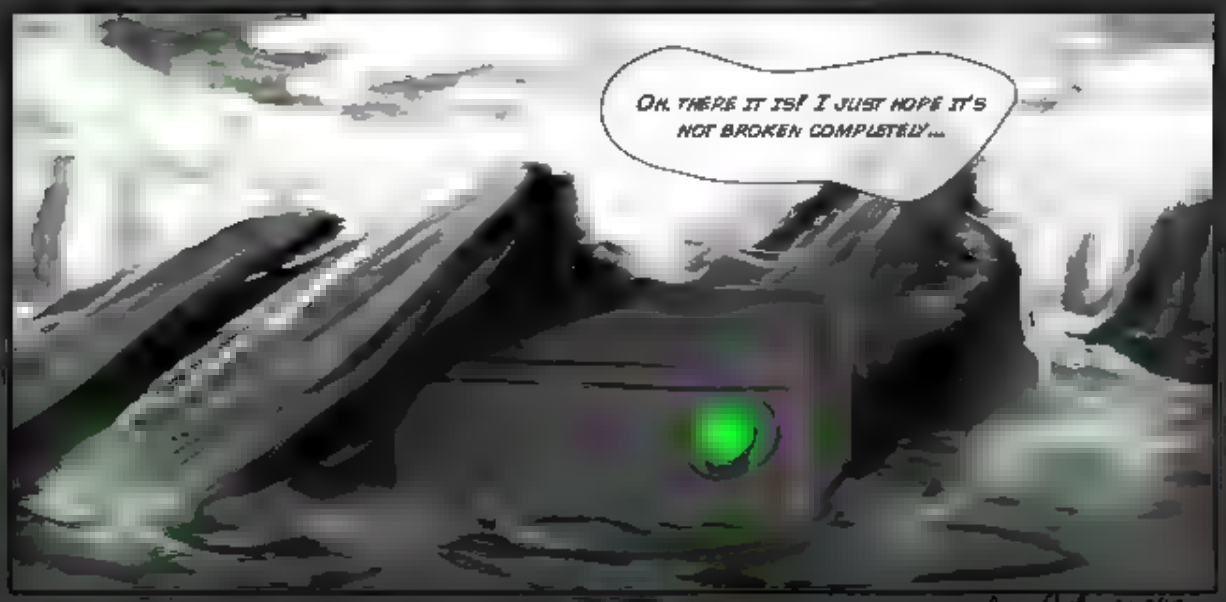
5/20/13

Wasted Away


...What? You can't just leave me! Leaving me here is pretty much a death sentence!
You had all the time in the world to change.. I was hoping that you would eventually come to your senses. But that's just not how it all played out.

I-if I was in charge, R-Radon... y-you could come w-with us.

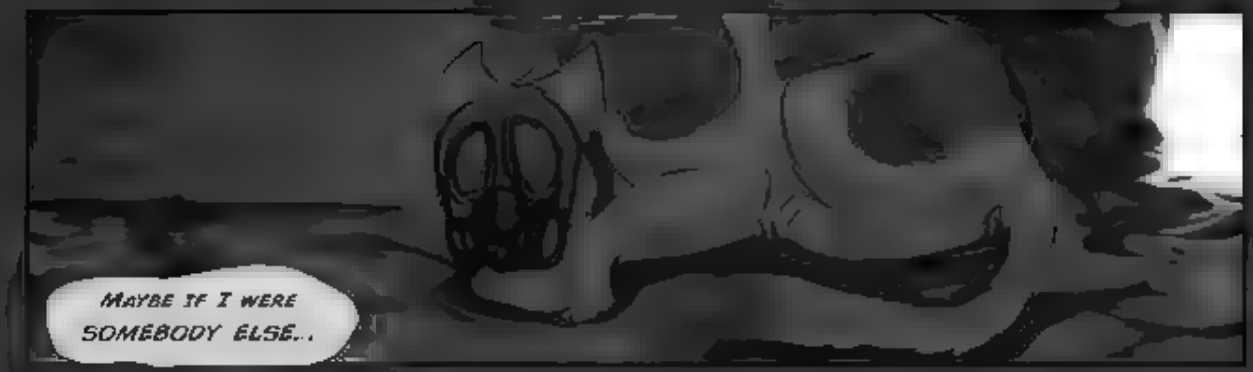
NO NO NO
NO NO NO
NO NO NO
NO NO NO
NO NO NO
NO NO NO
The bomb definitely did a number on the city...
What am I going to do. now? Survive on my own?
There's a stash of food beneath the house but Blitz will kick me out of that when she's around...


Oh. there it is! I just hope it's not broken completely...

8/23/13

Wasted Away

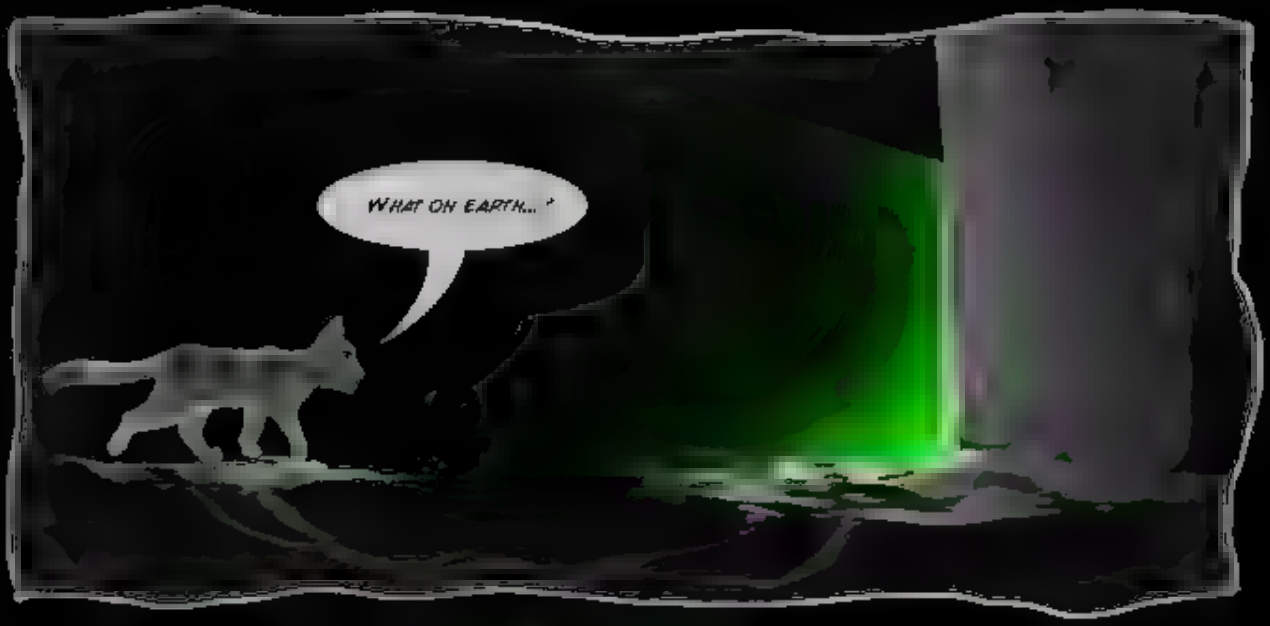
Whhhhaaa

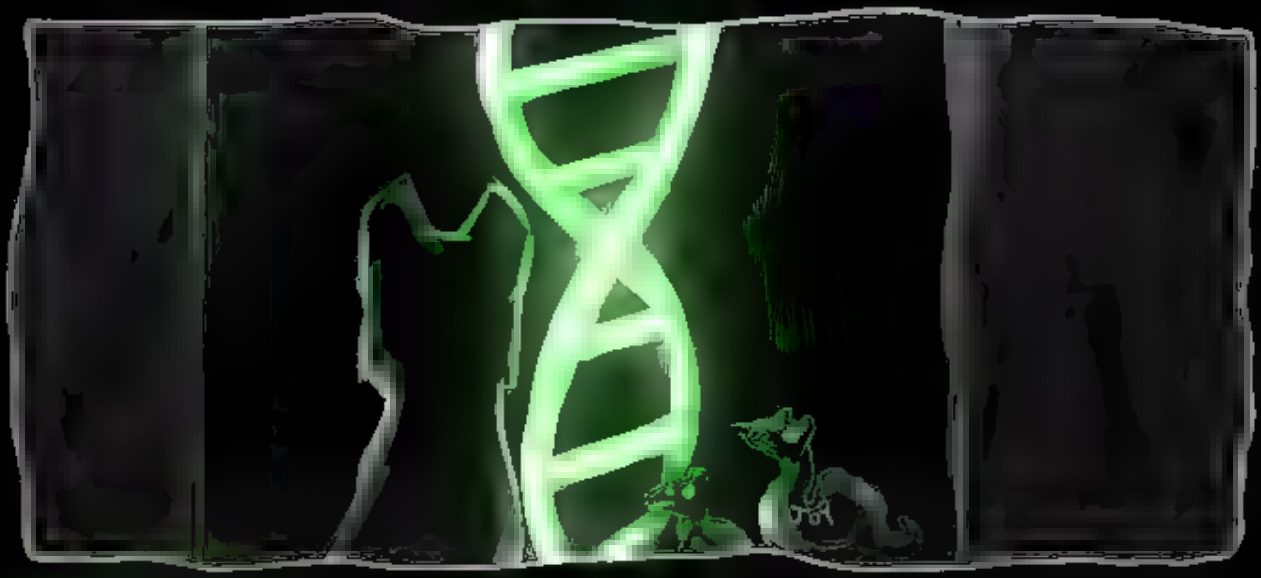


zzzz

Uh
No. Get back here!
Not you too!
Agh. Perhaps the radiation's affecting me after all...
Oh, get back here. I need you!

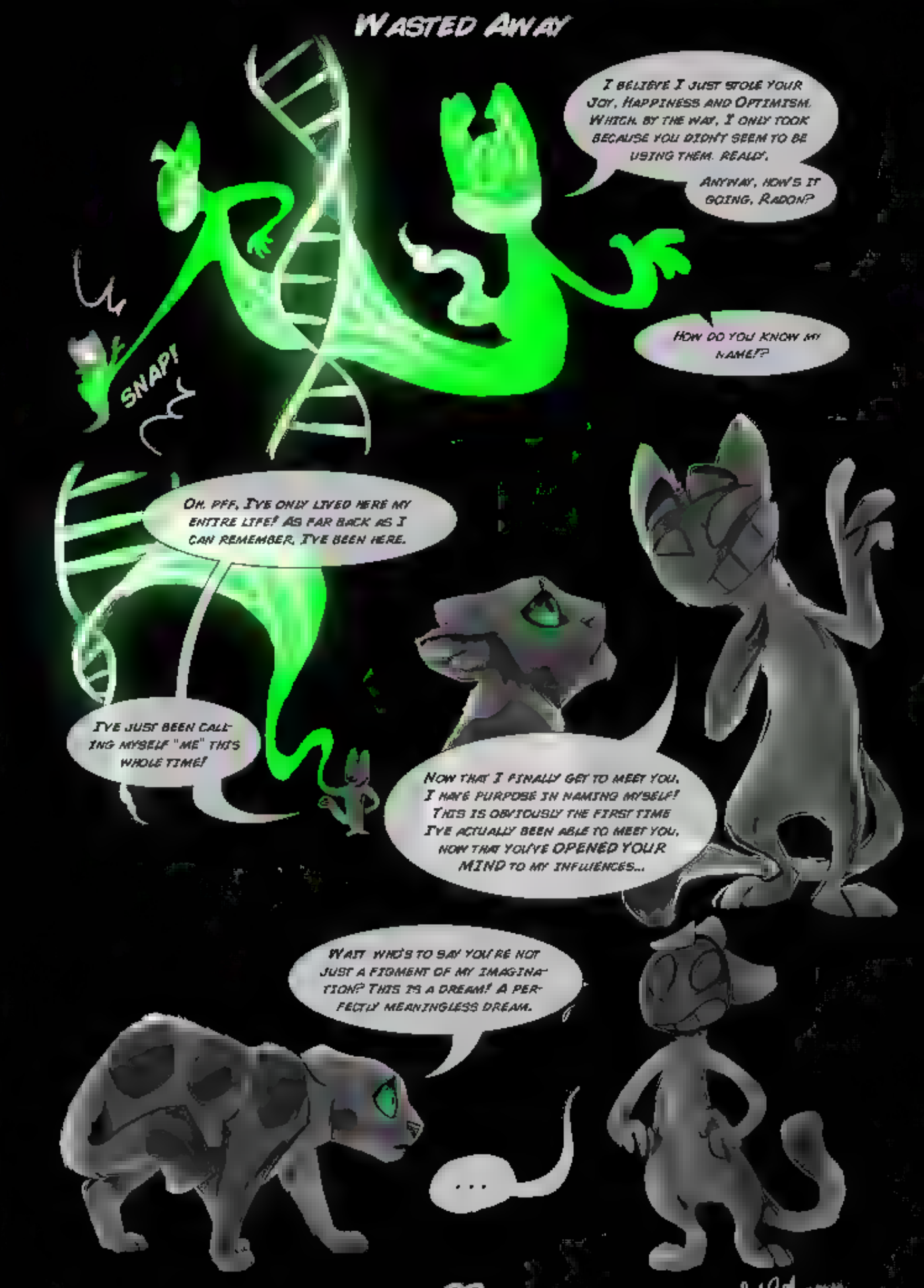
5/26/13





8/27/13

Aaahhhhhhh... that was a delicious nap. Hello!
...
Oh. I'll bet you're confused, aren't you?
Okay, okay... that's fine... yeah, I'll name myself real quick... uh... Radium.
My name is Radium and I am your polar opposite

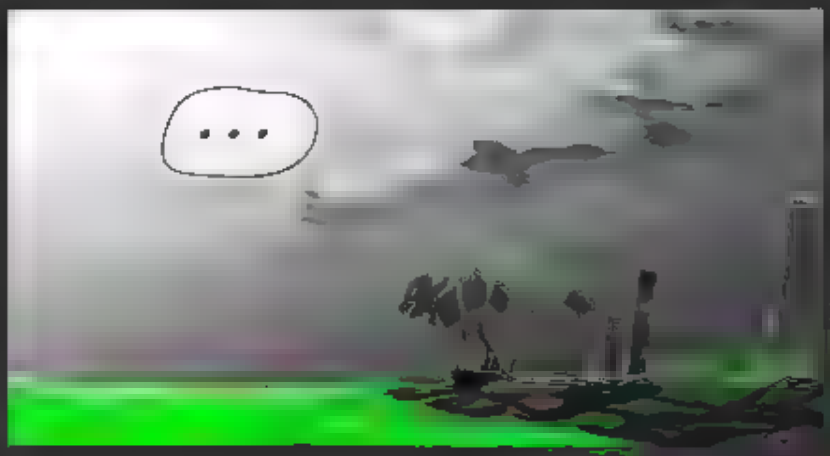

I believe I just stole your Joy, Happiness and Optimism. Which, by the way, I only took because you didn't seem to be using them. Really.
Anyway, how's it going, Radon?
How do you know my name!?
SNAP!
Oh, pff, I've only lived here my entire life! As far back as I can remember, I've been here.
I've just been calling myself "me" this whole time!
Now that I finally get to meet you, I have purpose in naming myself! This is obviously the first time I've actually been able to meet you, now that you've OPENED YOUR MIND to my influences...
Wait, who's to say you're not just a figment of my imagination? This is a dream! A perfectly meaningless dream.
...

Well, then I guess you won't get any of my help!
Now, that's what I thought. But if your "influences" could actually change me, I'll keep listening. I've got all night.
Alright! Alright... One thing is, I can actually TAKE OVER and CHANGE the way your body looks for as long as it takes for you to-
Forget it
...Okay, okay! I guess it won't hurt for a little while
I mean, I'm desperate. But when I return, is it possible to keep the disguise? As long as we can keep playing the illusion, nothing can go wrong.
Which begs the question... why do you have to take over if you can simply change how I look, anyway?
Well, I've always wanted to experience the real world, see... I'd love to see how it's like! I guess that would be my part of the deal.
Are you serious?
As serious as you always are!

Fine, then. I guess it would be worth it in the end...
Excellent! Now. I can proceed!
Let's see here... guanine. cytosine, adenine, thymine...
AHA!
SNAP!
What are you doing!?
I'm simply rearranging your genetic structure! It will give the illusion that you are a different cat!

There are so many alleles I need to edit to change your overall appearance.
Now, it can take me YEARS to properly change something as simple as eye color
I'm going to have to speed things up a little with the help of RADIATION!
SNAP,
Radiation?
Yup. Wakey wakey, Radon!
Izzzzzzzzzzzzzz
WHA!?
I shouldn't do this, I shouldn't do this... But I must. For my family. For me.
Alright
One...
two...
THREE!

9/1/13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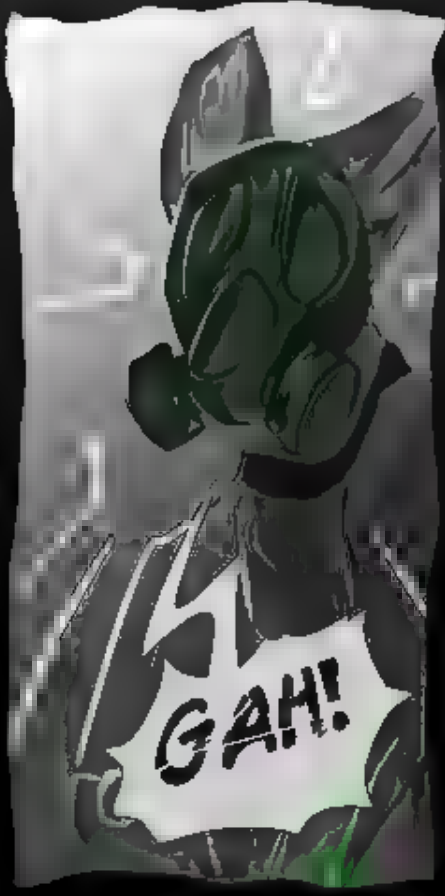
I can't do this...

But this is the one chance I have to get back to my family...

SPLORCH!


GAH!

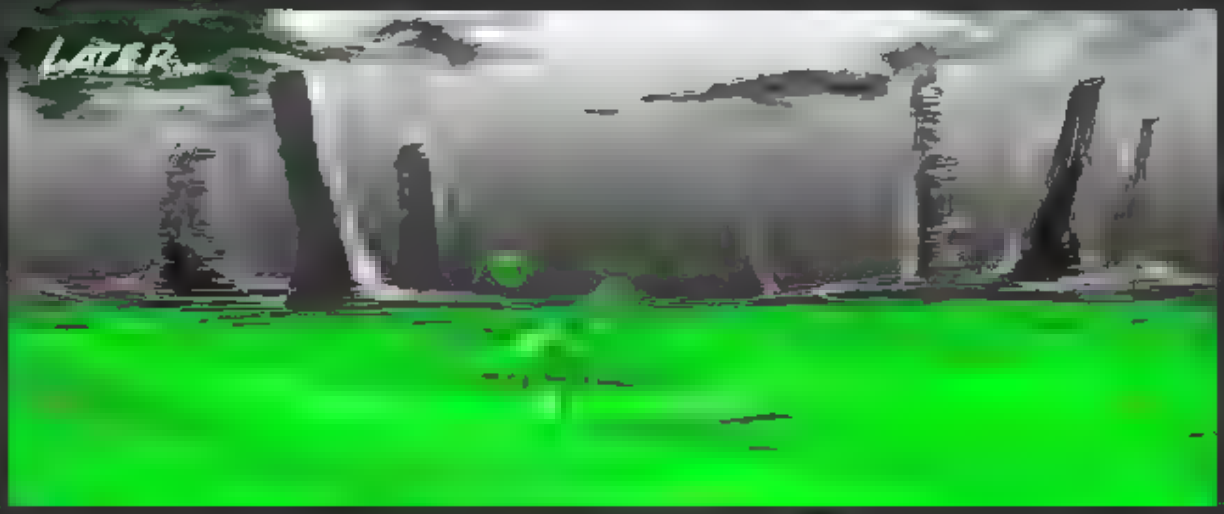
Ahhh, that's much quicker!

Just give me a little while and everything will have been changed...

...Done!
Hold onto your hats. Because I'm about to take over completely!

9/5/15

I feel as if everything I knew that made sense about this world doesn't make ANY sense anymore...
Can everyone do this?
Not unless they have someone like ME in their head!
Whatever you are...
Oh, you have no idea how COOL this is! I've always wanted to be REAL!
Well, don't get too happy. It's not going to be permanent. Have your fun for a little while and then I'm taking


Later...

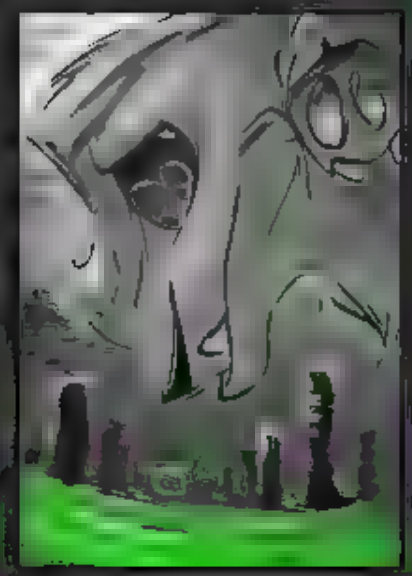
SPLOOSH!

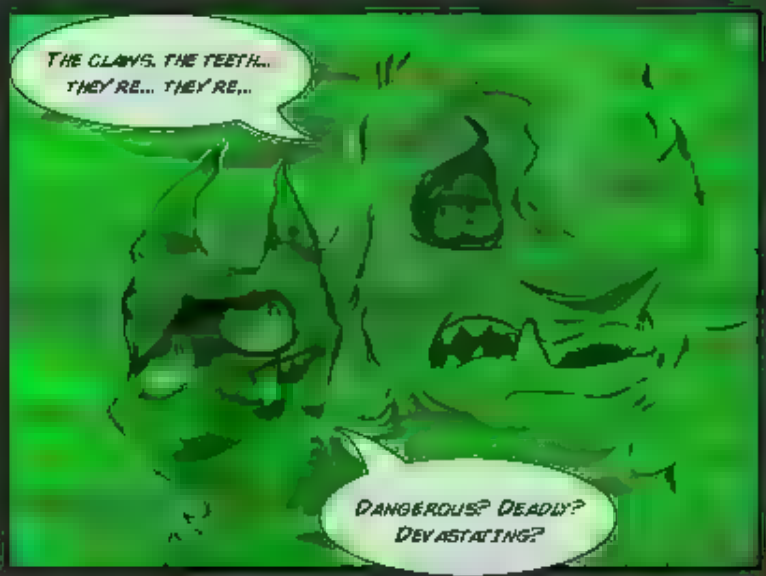
Oh, Gerald, I thought we were dead down there!
I almost wish I were dead, this is painful enough...

And you know... I feel a bit different than I remember...

Ey Ger? You look a little...

Wait.

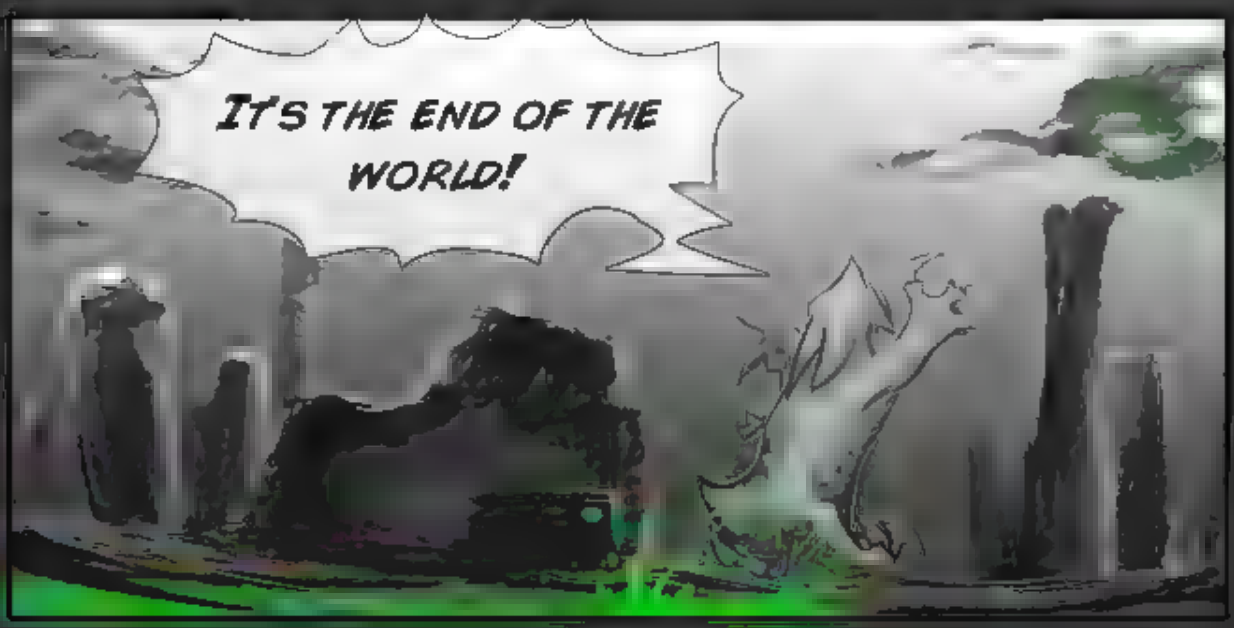



The claws. The teeth... they're... they're...
Dangerous? Deadly? Devastating?

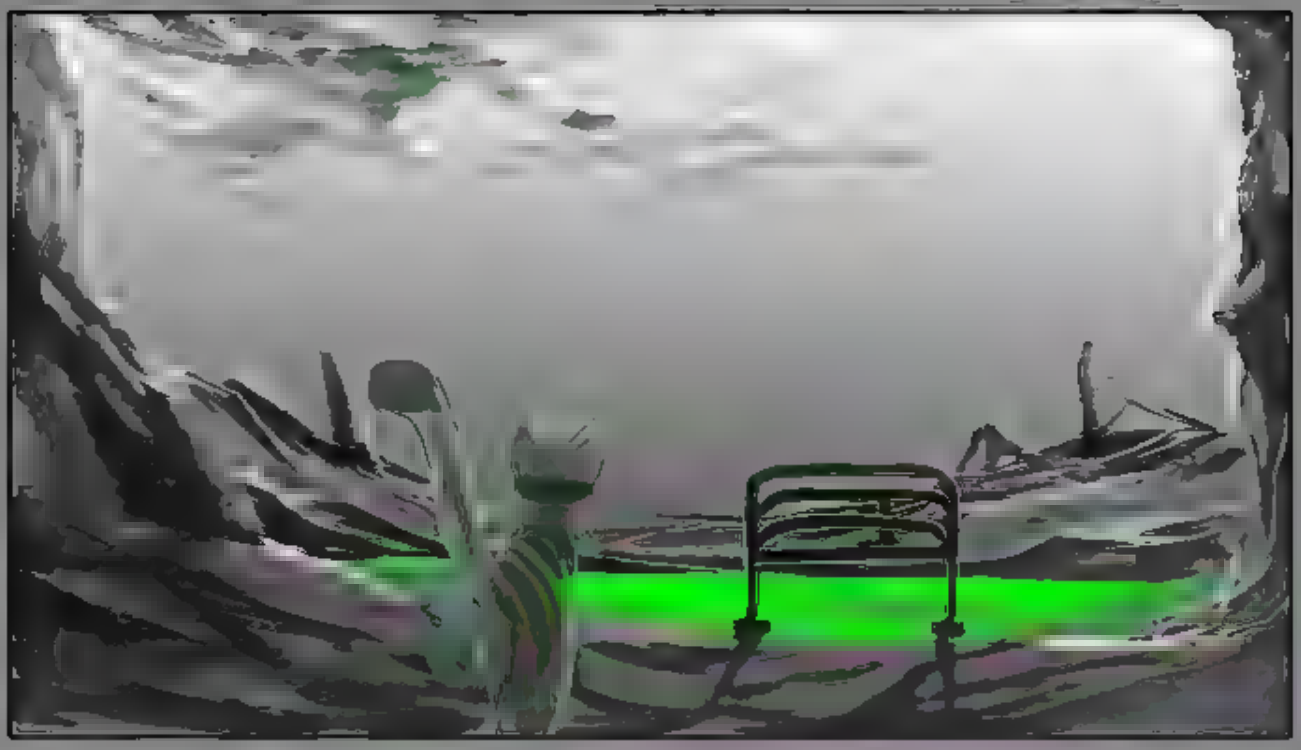
Horrible!
I'm hideous! We're hideous, Ger!

Oh, come on. We're alive! Can't you at least be happy that-
You don't understand! I spent hours each day primping myself to absolute PERFECTION!
And now... now I'm HORRIFYING!

Now, listen! It's not that big of a deal..
...


It's the end of the world!

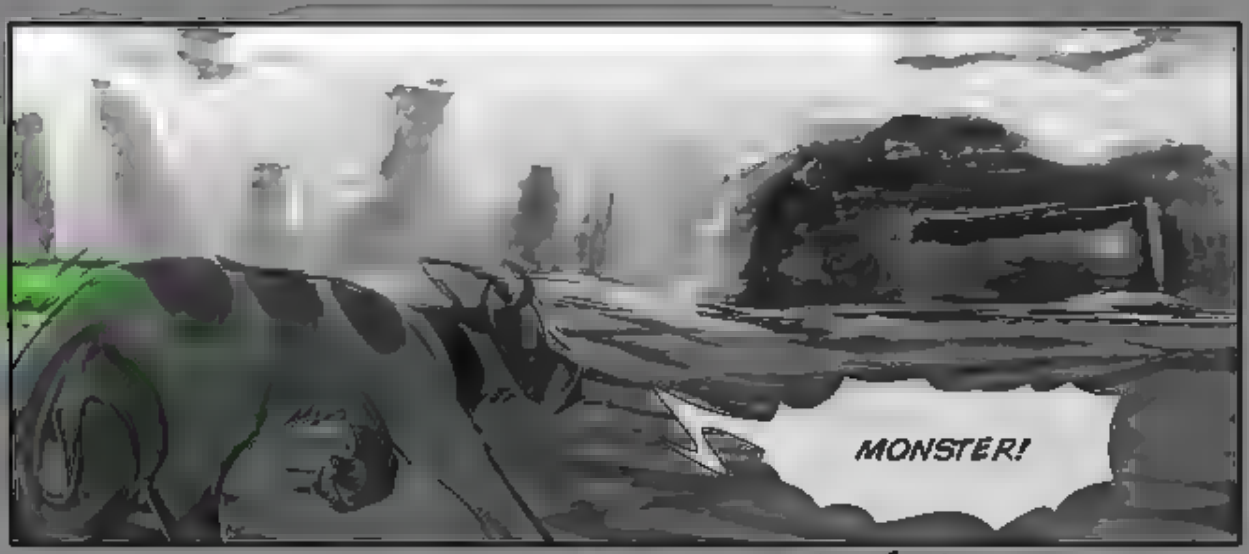
IS THIS IT? AH, THIS IS AMAZ-ING! I NEVER THOUGHT REAL LIFE WOULD BE THIS. UH... SCENIC!



uc: SMACK!

9/17/13

JUST ADMIRING THE BEAUTY OF NATURE, LIKE A REAL CAT
JUST SITTING ON THE BENCH, ENJOYING THE BREEZE. LIKE A REAL CAT
JUST GAZING AT THE WILDLIFE. LIKE A REAL CAT.



Erik Rudd 9/31/13

You hear that, Static?
Uh. Nope
You can't possibly hear over the sound of your own chewing. Listen up!
You know. I rather like eating over listening. Thank you very much! How long do you think this food here will stay nice before the rat's get to it? Yeaaaah.
Shish!
Okay
Whoosh!
Pat
Pat
Pat
Whoa. Hey!

HEY! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING HERE!?
OH, DON'T MIND ME. I'M JUST A CAT!
...YEAH, I GET THAT. WHAT'S UP WITH THE GAS MASK? ALSO, WHY DO YOU LOOK LIKE A GREEN VERSION OF MY BROTHER?
BROTHER?
YEAH.
OH, WELL... NOT SURE WHO YOUR BROTHER IS, BUT MY NAME'S RADIUM!
AND THANK GOODNESS I FOUND YOU. I WAS STARTING TO THINK I WAS THE ONLY CAT LEFT ALIVE.
RADON. I KNOW IT'S YOU. YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ANYONE. I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU WERE GOING TO FOLLOW US...

Scott Pratt 9/25/13

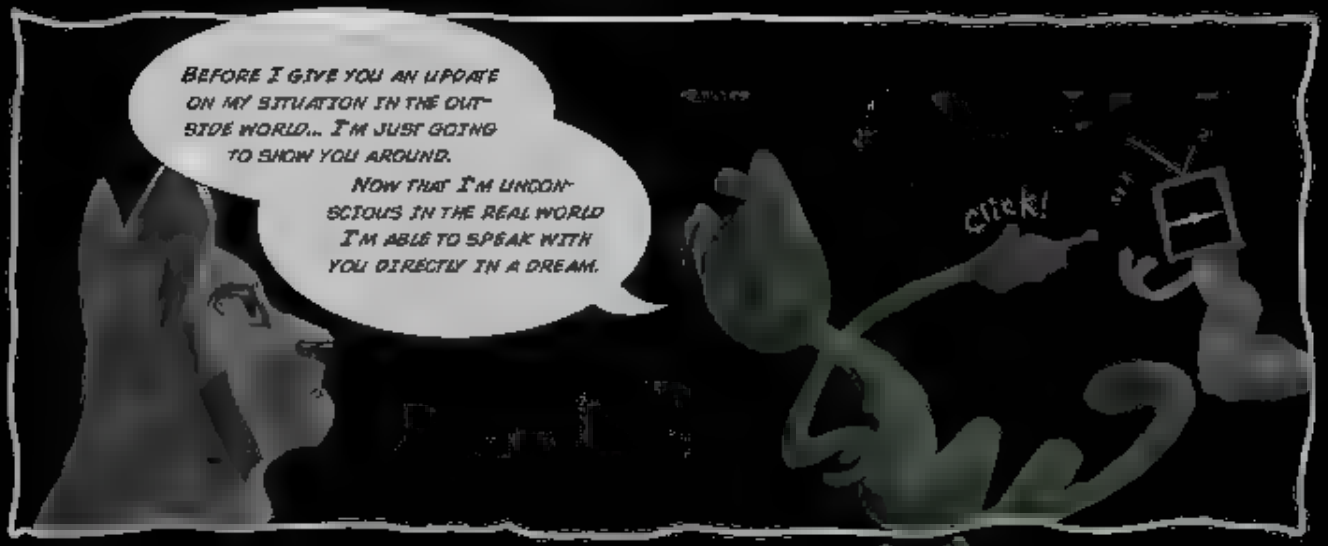
...Radon? Oh. this all makes sense now! This must be his family or something... Is this why he was so desperate?
But Blitz! Okay, I know for a fact that cats can't suddenly change their color whenever they feel like it.
Yes. they can! Have you SEEN those cats at Radon's waste pool?
I haven't seen one change like that over a couple hours...
Alright. alright. "Radium"... whoever you are you can't stay here. My little brother and I are sticking together and as far as I know you're just here to mooch on our food.
Hm. well, then... I'll just tell the other survivors there's plenty to eat down here...
If there are any other cats alive. anyway...

Zach Pratt 9/27/13

Oh, please, Blitz? He sounds cool enough! And I miss Radon! We can start a family again. and-
The green imposter will never be part of our family
Oh, come on! He doesn't have to be part of our family, he can just tag along if he wants... right?
...
You know what, Greeny? You win.
But I'll tell you what, if you ever let anyone know about us, the food, or the fact that we even survived the explosion at all I swear I will rip that goofy grin off your face faster than-
He's grinning?

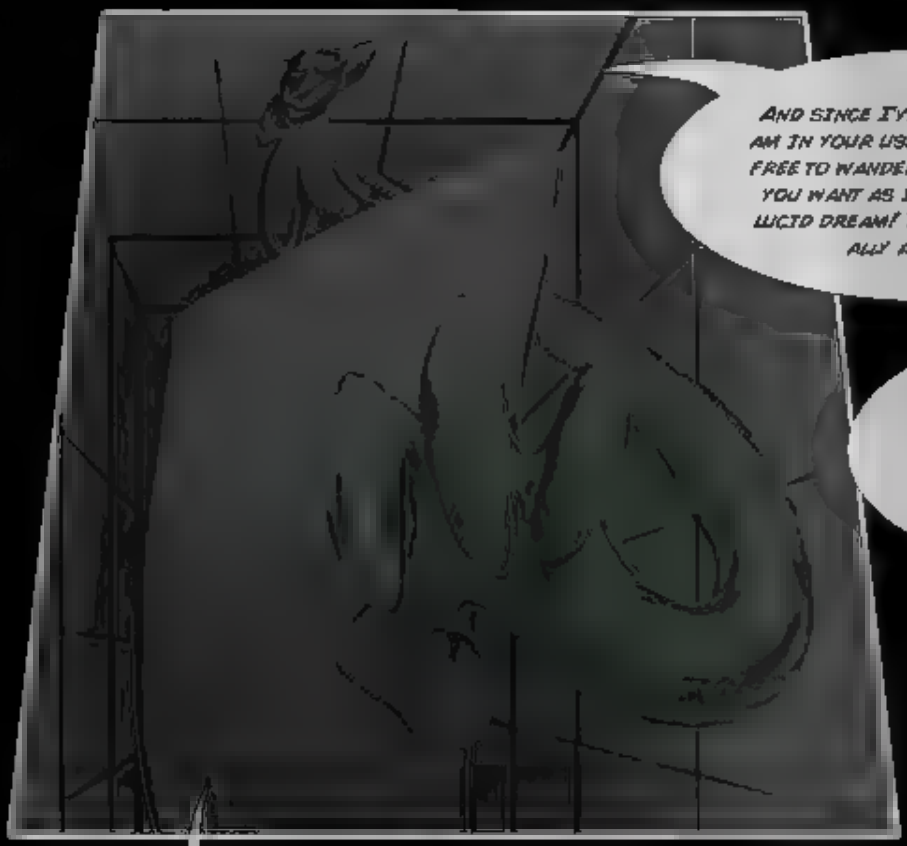
AGH. FORGET THAT, STATIC!
NOW, ARE YOU STILL BRAVE ENOUGH TO BECOME PART OF OUR GROUP?
ABSOLUTELY!

THAT NIGHT...
OH, HELLO, RADON! I'M GLAD YOU COULD JOIN ME.


BEFORE I GIVE YOU AN UPDATE ON MY SITUATION IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD... I'M JUST GOING TO SHOW YOU AROUND.
NOW THAT I'M UNCONSCIOUS IN THE REAL WORLD I'M ABLE TO SPEAK WITH YOU DIRECTLY IN A DREAM.
Click!

RRRIIIP!
Pluck!

IF YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, THIS IS YOUR MIND



And since I've taken over and am in your usual place, you are free to wander around however you want as if it's a constant lucid dream! You can do literally anything!

The only real trick that you can't really do is teleport to areas that we haven't already been to.

Otherwise I would have traveled the whole of your mind already!

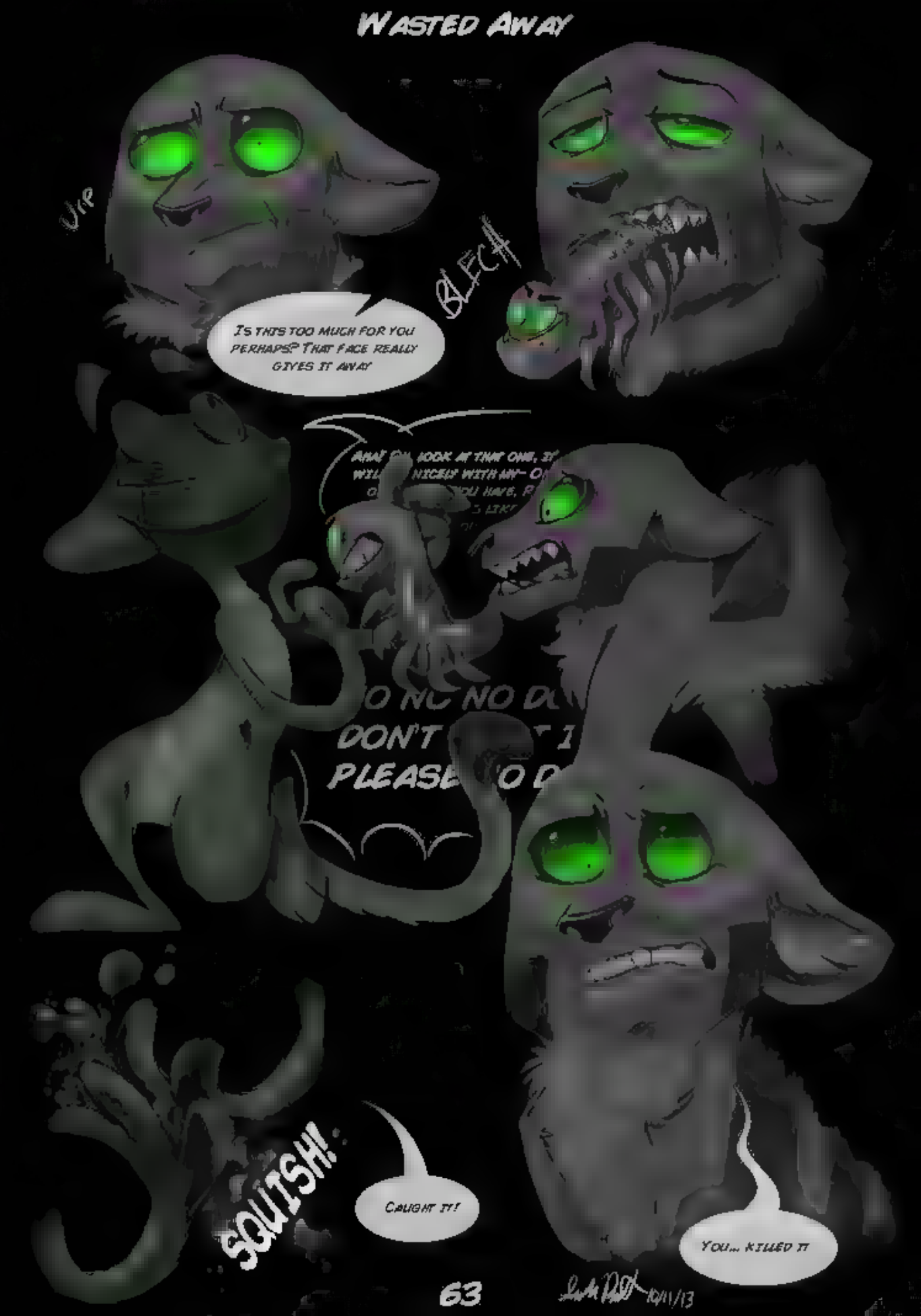
You must discover yourself, yes? No cheating at that

Eh, Radon? You see that table I materialized over there? My head's on it.

10/7/13

Oh? Perhaps a different setting would suit you better?
No problem
POOF

POOF
Isn't this more relaxing and comfortable?


Urp
BLECH
Is this too much for you perhaps? That face really gives it away
NO NO DO
DON'T
PLEASE
SQUISH!
Caught it!
You... killed it

10/11/13

Er!
No, wait. You don't understand! I wanted to keep that! You STOLE the other ones. Remember?
Oh... well. Who needs peace of mind, anyway? Sorry.
Okay. Radon, let me first tell you about your family. I found them again. And with a bit of cleverness they allowed me to tag along with them!
Great! Great
Now, let me tell you something about myself. I've been wandering the expanse of your mind as far back as I can remember!
The parts that I have access too, anyway Sadly everything I remember only dates back a few months.

Months?
The moment of confusion I had experienced when I suddenly became AWARE of my [redacted] moment I began remembering things.
I was looking for a way out. You know? A purpose. But I had no knowledge of what I was. I was simply a formless ENTITY.
As I wandered your mind I came to realize I didn't belong there. YOUR memories and YOUR feelings began to envelop my existence as I journeyed closer and closer to the core of YOU!
And then I saw you. You were in a dream. The brain had created a projection for you to wander around in while I watched.

I called out to you again and again. I tried to communicate with you every way I could think of, but it was like you were ignoring me.
Your mind had rejected my existence as if you had become so enveloped in yourself you didn't think you [redacted] else.
But yesterday you did something I never thought you would do! You OPENED YOUR MIND.
You wished you were something DIFFERENT!
You began to see things that you had subconsciously REFUSED to comprehend!

I could speak with you! I could feel it. I KNEW something had changed.
Now I had the ability to show myself the way I wanted and your mind granted me a shape you could understand and recognise.
With your acceptance I had become REAL!
Uh.

So. What do you think of me? I even named myself after you. How about that?
You're crazy
...
Actually... no. I'm crazy. I probably developed a disorder over the last few months after founding Wasted Away. You being said "disorder"
It all makes sense. Now! I might not look any different but the effects the waste has on my mind is another thing entirely.

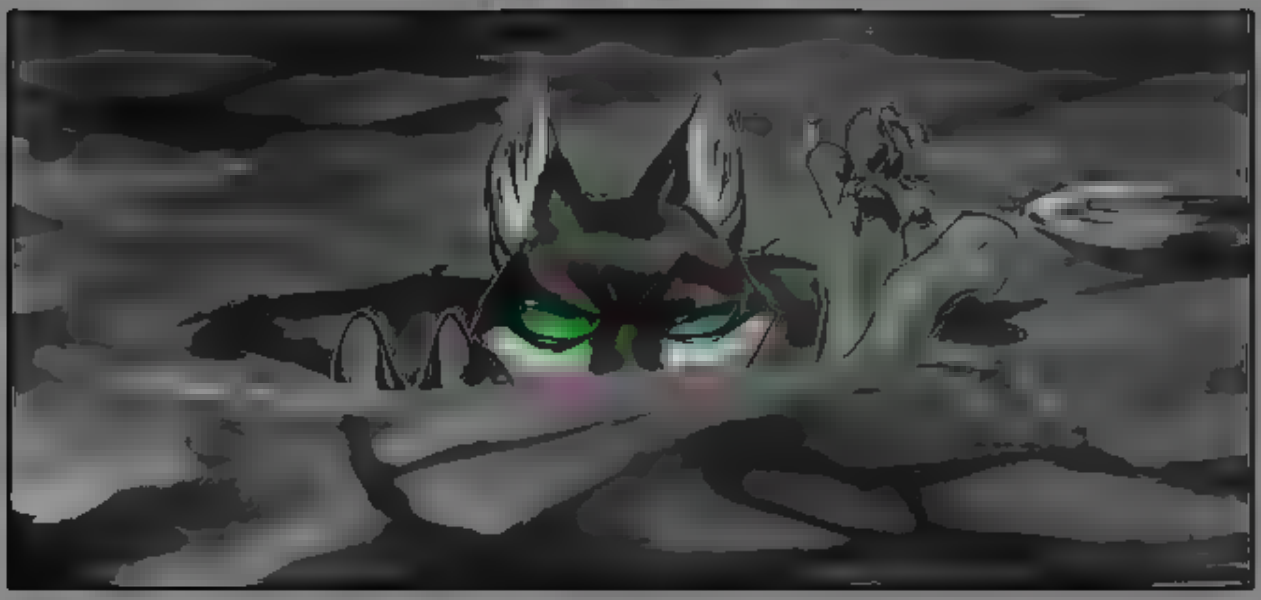
You're just like a split personality that began to show itself after being triggered by my desperation. Or completely coinci-
Again. There's no proof at all to tell me that you're not just my mind working overtime.
Most likely, you appeared after I discovered the addictive waste pits back at Wasted Away
To me, you're only an image created by my mind to help me understand things I couldn't otherwise understand. You're a figment of my imagination
What?

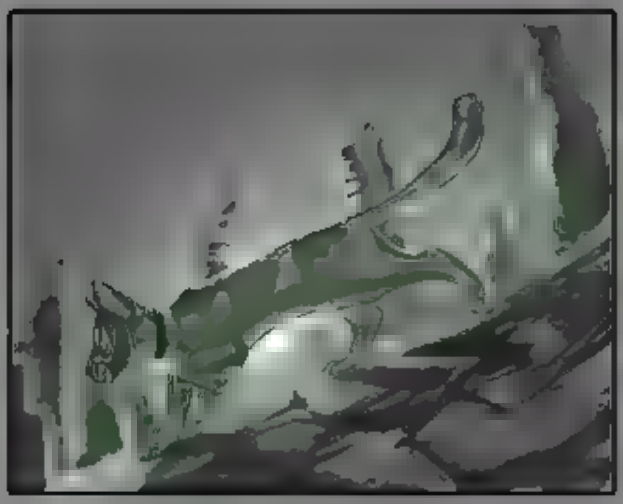
Look. I'm sorry... well. actually I'm not It might sound mean but you're only a split personality.
and because of that there's no possible way you can prove to me you're real. At all.
...You're wrong. I think. I feel! I know so!

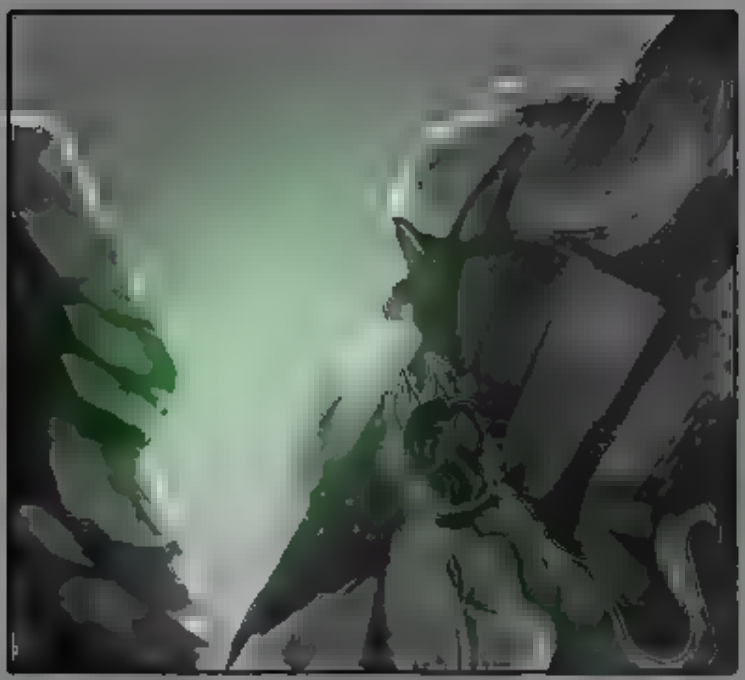
SPLOOSH!
He's just another part of my mind is all.
Just another part of my mind...

YAAAAAWWNNN...
YOU'RE AWAKE!
EYY AHH!
STATIC! SOME OF US ARE STILL SLEEPING!
OH, SORRY BLITZ!
YOU'RE NOT SORRY!
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
GO BACK TO SLEEP OR LEAVE ME ALONE UNTIL I WAKE UP.
OH, YEAH, HAHA... ALRIGHT
PSSST. RADIUM. I'M "GOING BACK TO SLEEP!"
GOOD CHILD.

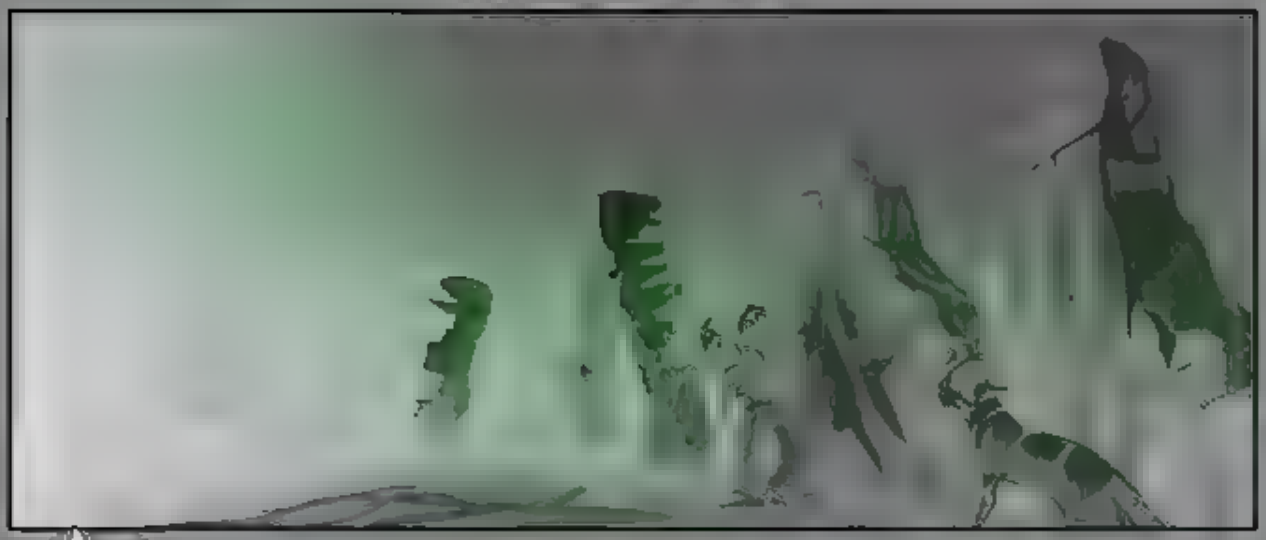
SHUFFLE
DID YOU HEAR THAT?
NOPE.
UGH... LISTEN. BOTH OF YOU. DONT MAKE A SOUND...

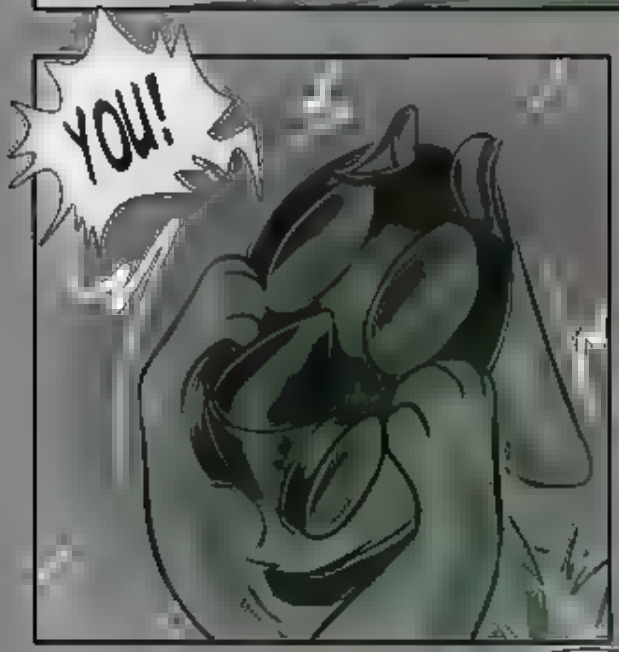






SHUFFLE

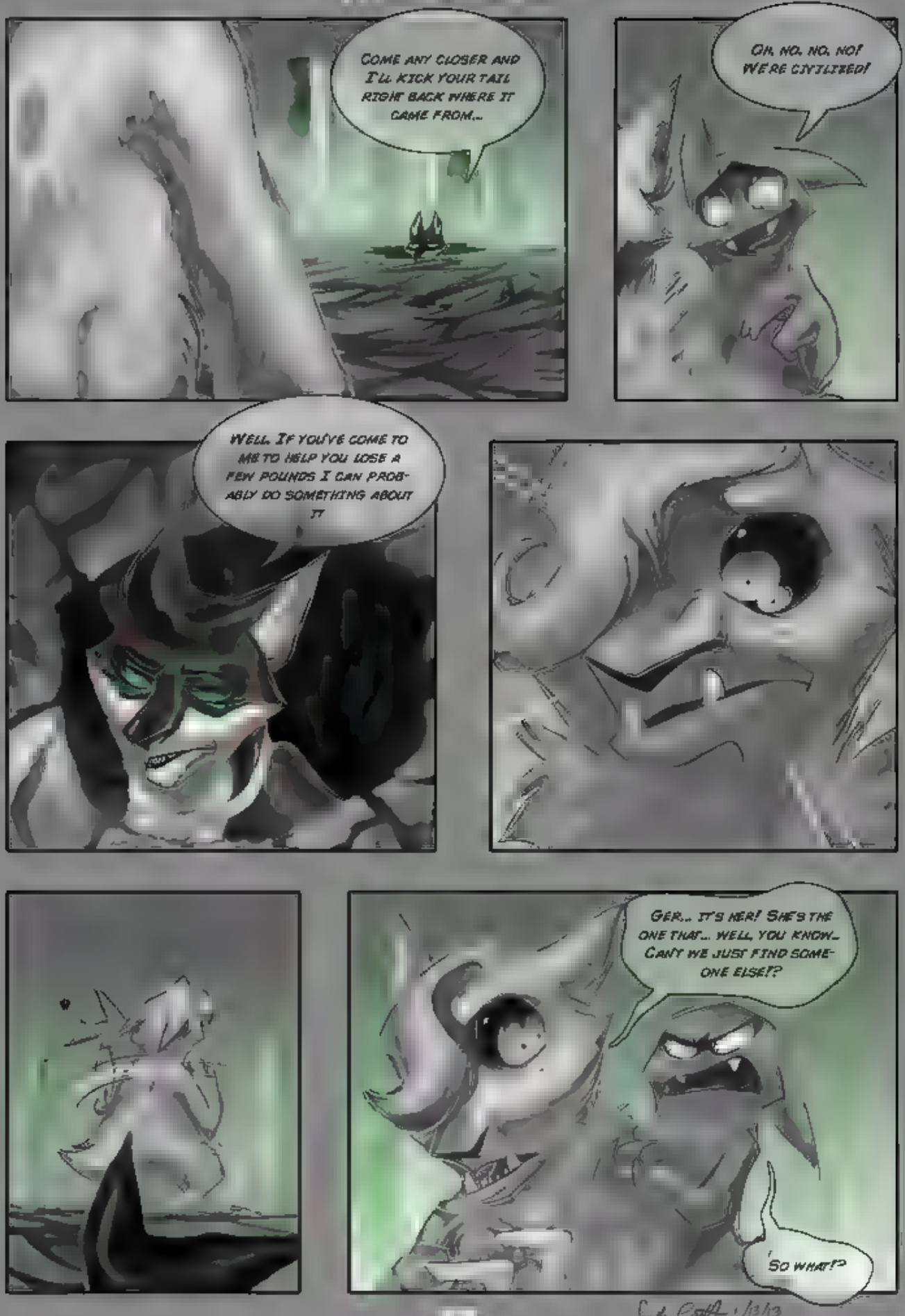




Lisa Pratt 11/7/15

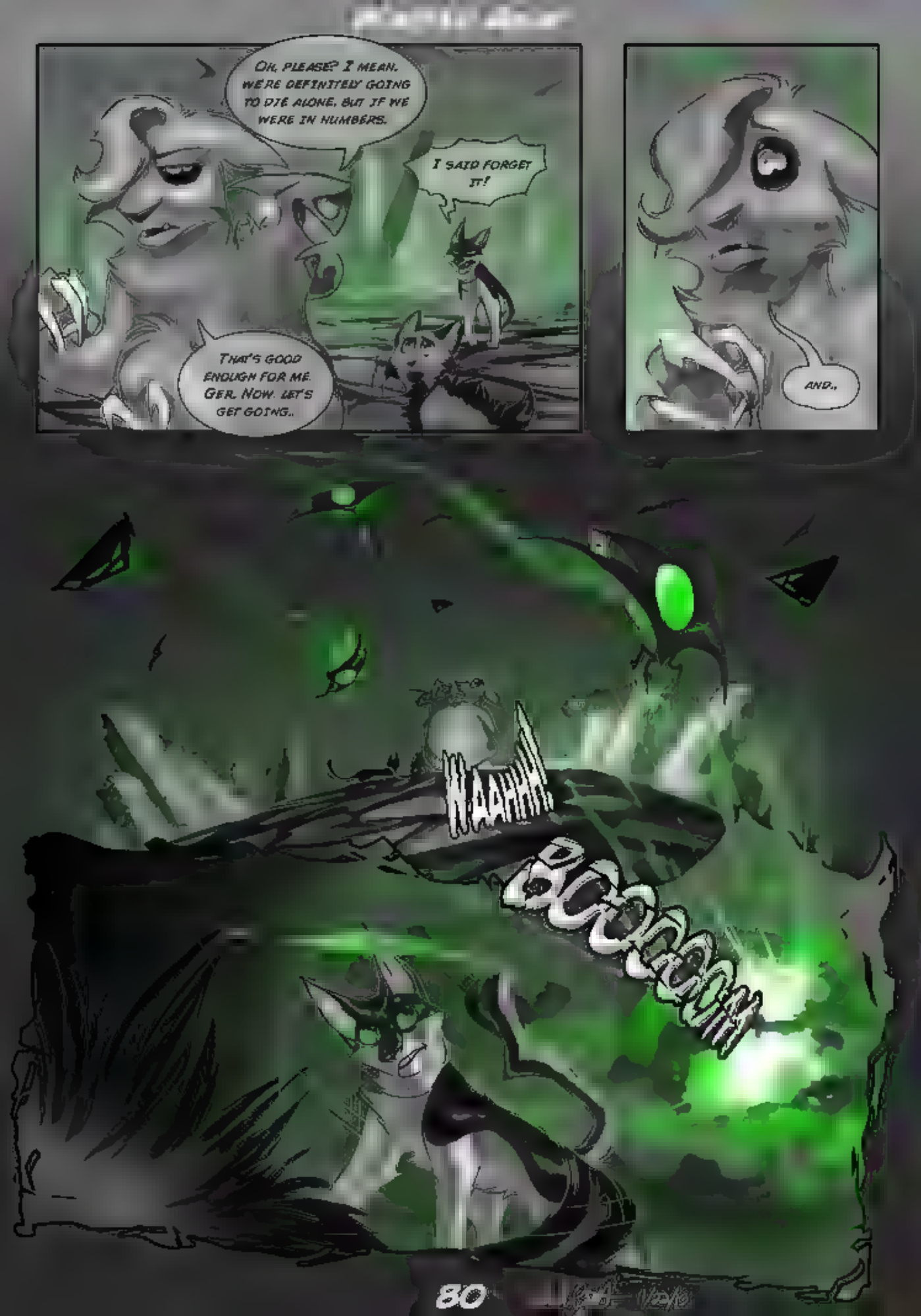
It wasn't just grooming! It was-
Your genius', yes... but have you thought about talking to strangers?
We should form a group. It would really benefit us considering you're not going to go out of your way to find any food.
Hm? No. I don't speak with people. People speak with me! Plea
Look. If you really want people to talk to you, you're going to have to speak with them FIRST.
Ohhh... fine. Whatever you say Ger.
But who made me the spokesperson? If you want to socialize this bad you can be the speaker. And if it doesn't work. I'll-
Excellent then! Onward. Ez.

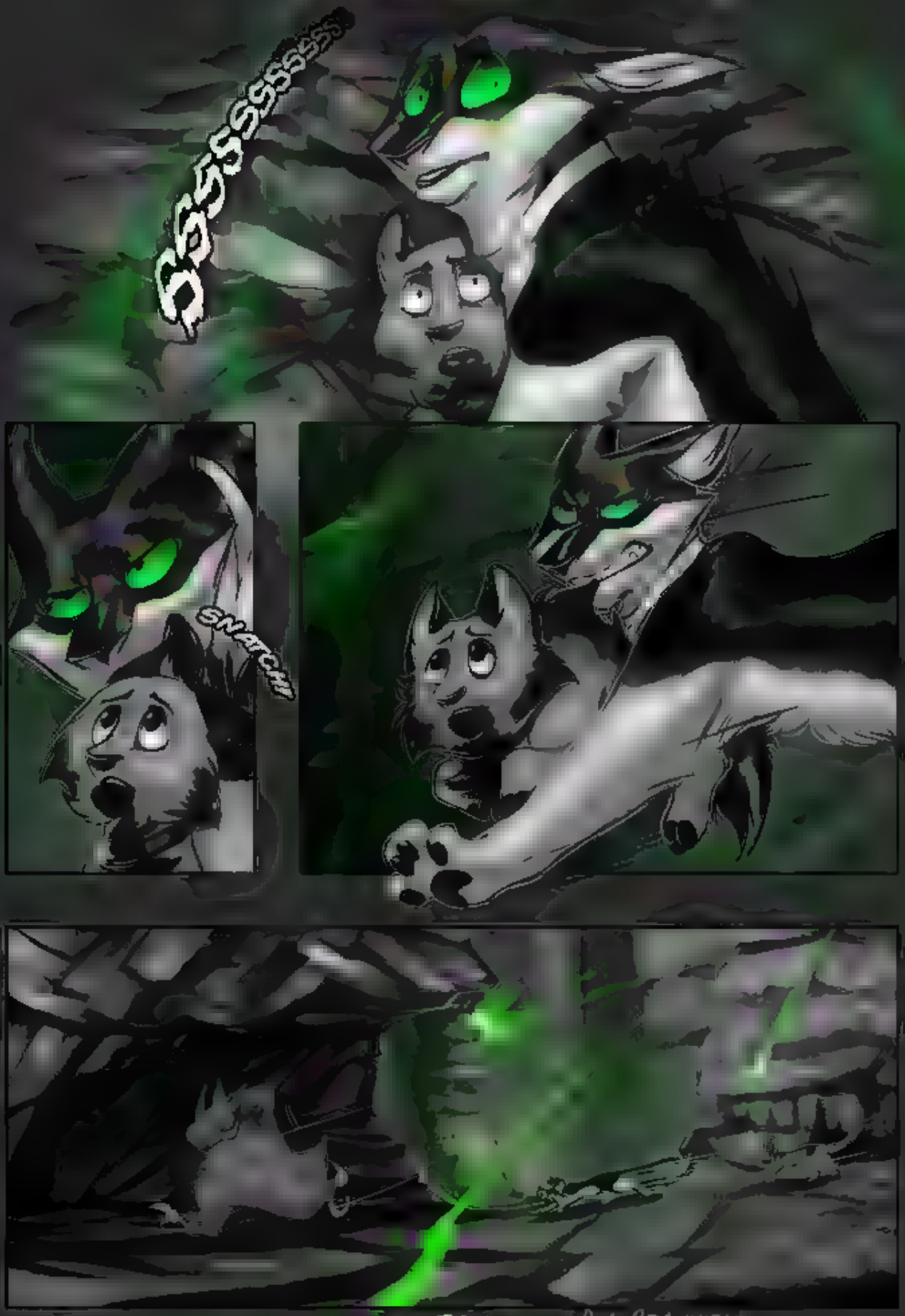
1/10/13

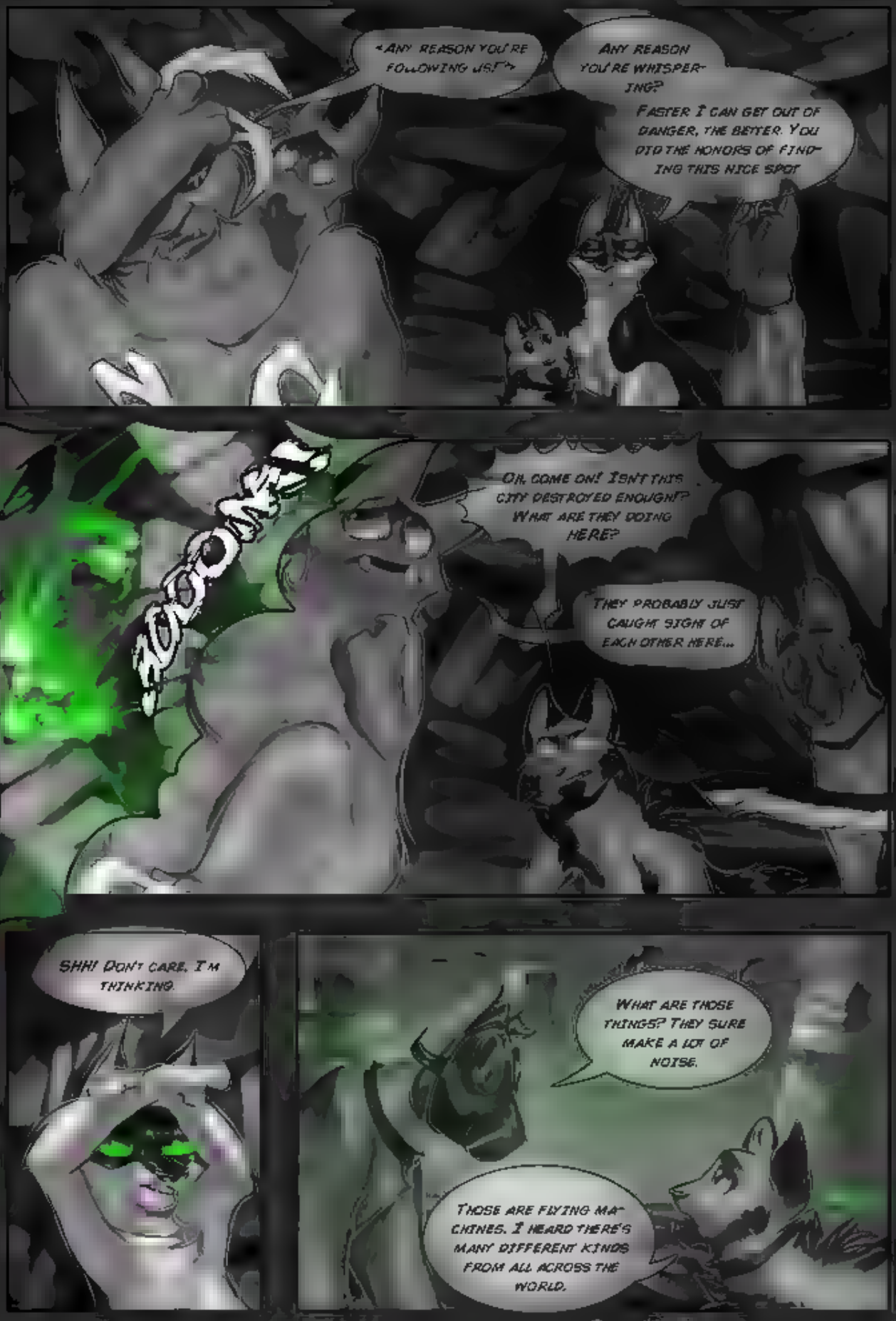

COME ANY CLOSER AND I'LL KICK YOUR TAIL RIGHT BACK WHERE IT CAME FROM...
OH, NO, NO, NO! WE'RE CIVILIZED!
WELL. IF YOU'VE COME TO ME TO HELP YOU LOSE A FEW POUNDS I CAN PROBABLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT
GEH... IT'S HER! SHE'S THE ONE THAT... WELL, YOU KNOW... CAN'T WE JUST FIND SOMEONE ELSE!?
SO WHAT!?

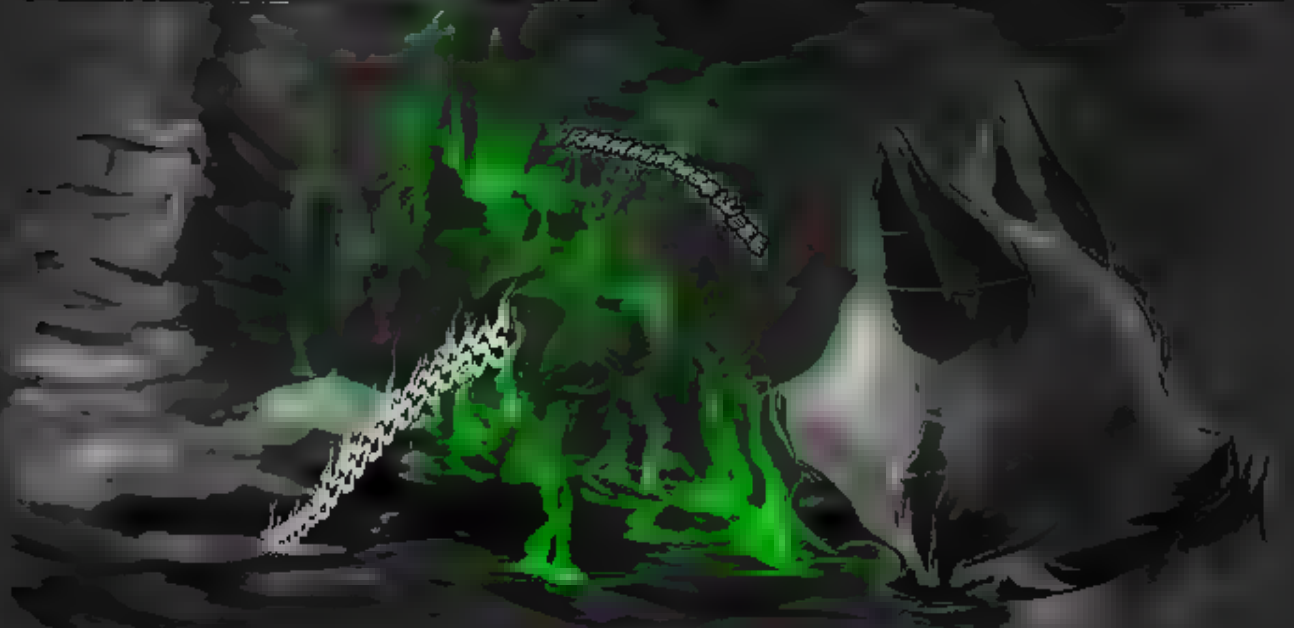
She doesn't recognize you! What if there aren't any other survivors left?
So... you actually want to form an alliance?
Now's our chance to form an alliance!
...I must be speaking with even more idiots.
Ohhhhhh, seems like she heard too much. Let's go, Ger.
Ez!
Get out of my sight, meatbag.

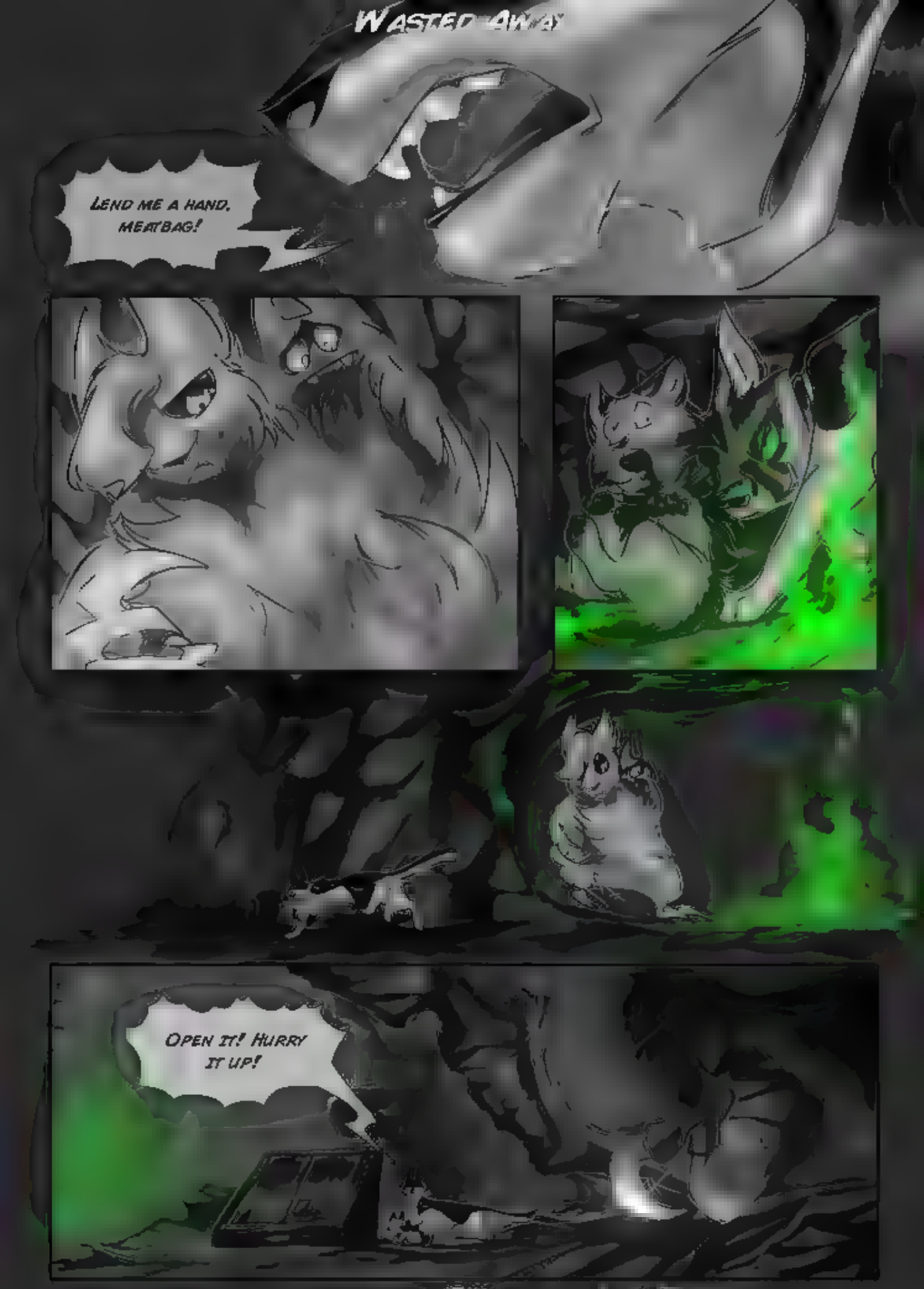
No! No. what he meant to say was-
Ohh. hi! You're the guy Radium was afraid of...
Yeah. wow. the wildlife here sure is... crazy
Okay. you see, we've been traveling alone for a while and decided it would be best to find any other survivors! So. if you don't mind. we'd like to-
Hah! There's only room for two and a half in this pack Sorry fella.
But there's thr-
I wouldn't consider you a cat just yet.
I still have my doubts...
11/14/13

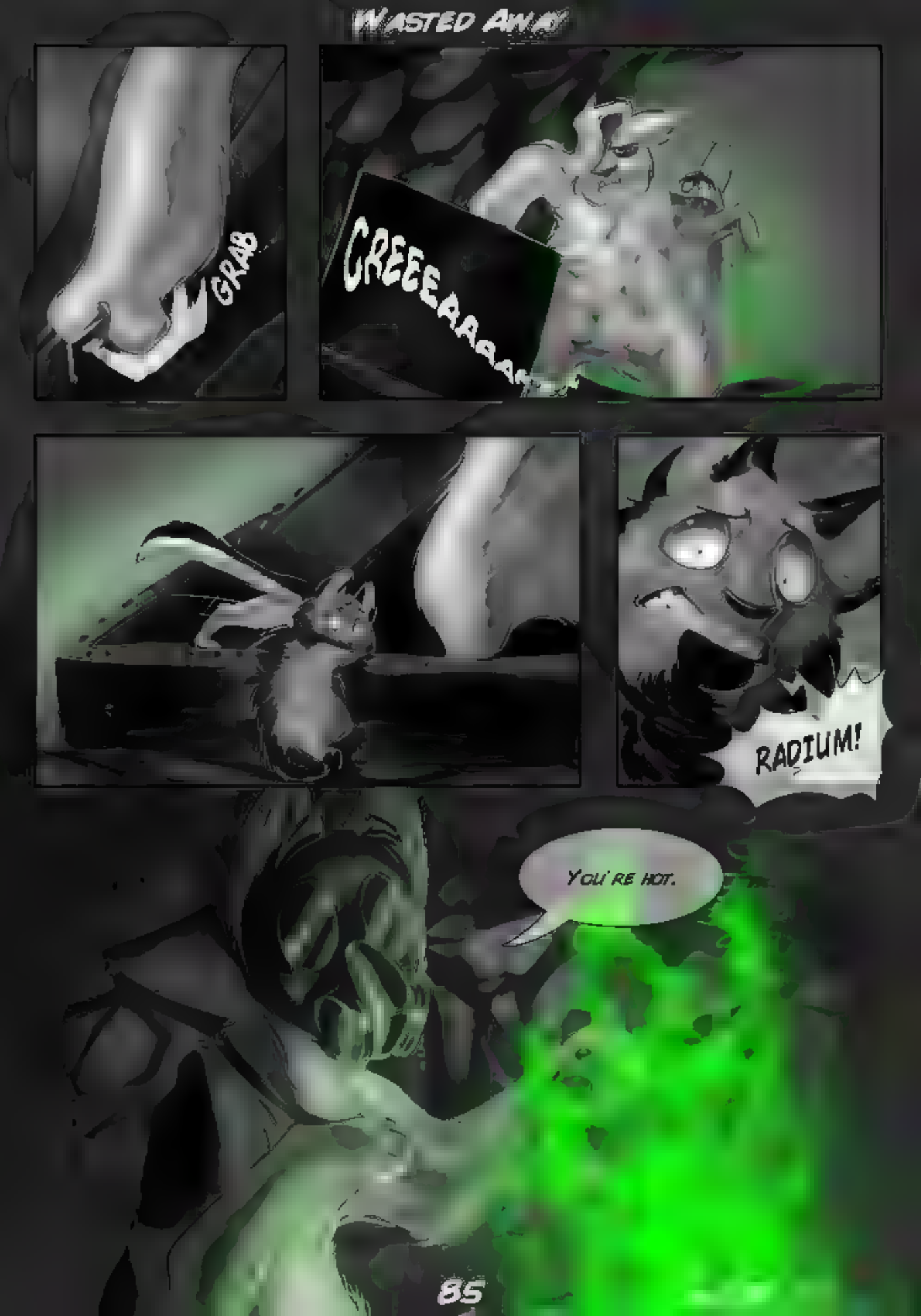

OH, PLEASE? I MEAN, WE'RE DEFINITELY GOING TO DIE ALONE, BUT IF WE WERE IN NUMBERS.
I SAID FORGET IT!
THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME. GER. NOW. LET'S GET GOING..
AND..
NAAHHH!


SSSSSSSSSS
SNATCH!

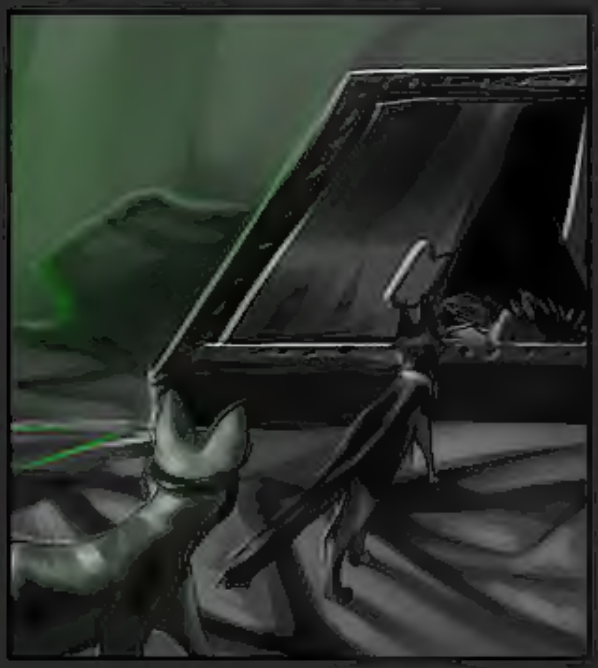

"Any reason you're following us?"
Any reason you're whispering?
Faster I can get out of danger, the better. You did the honors of finding this nice spot
BOOOOM!
Oh, come on! Isn't this city destroyed enough? What are they doing here?
They probably just caught sight of each other here...
SHH! Don't care. I'm thinking.
What are those things? They sure make a lot of noise.
Those are flying machines. I heard there's many different kinds from all across the world.


RMMMMMMMMMM
SSSS


Lend me a hand, meatbag!
Open it! Hurry it up!

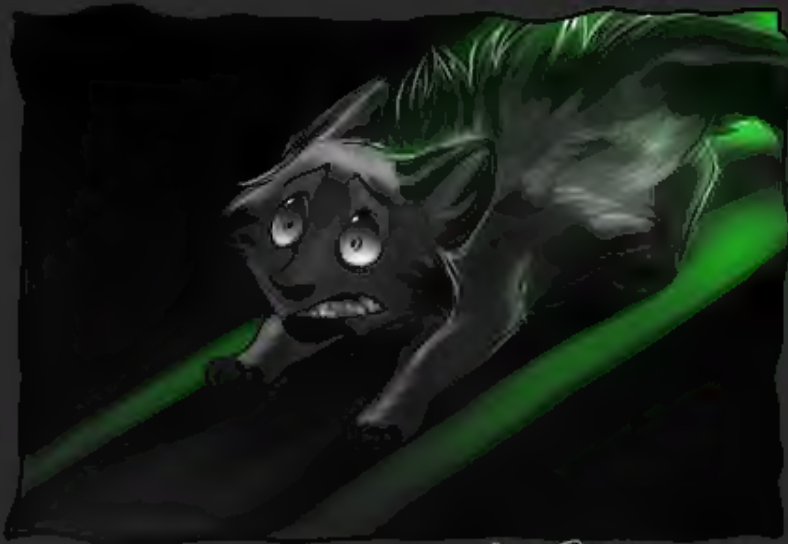

GRAB
CREEEAAAAK
RADIUM!
You're hot.

STATIC!
RADIUM! CMON, IT'S DANGEROUS OUT HERE!
PLEASE!
OH... OH, ALRIGHT
BUT I HONESTLY DON'T SEE THE PROBLEM! WHAT'S SO DANGEROUS?



Static! Static, you could have died out there!
I am supposed to protect you!
We couldn't leave Radium! You know it's the right thing!

BOOM!



12/16/13

...STATIC! WE BOTH KNOW THAT OUR FAMILY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIM!
BUT YOU SAID RADIUM WOULD BECOME PART OF OUR FAMILY!
I DID NOT!
BUT HE COULD BECOME PART OF-

HE'S ANNOYING. HE'S WEIRD. AND HE DOESN'T KNOW ANY-THING! SURVIVAL OF THE FIT-TEST! DO YOU THINK HE WAS MEANT TO BE HERE. RIGHT NOW. ALIVE!?

Sarah Pratt 12/19/13

12/22/13

End of Part 1

10/24/13